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ABSTRACT

Among 59 papers are the following:"Women's Transitions from Welfare to Paid Work and Education" (Andruske); "Sustaining Commitment to Social Responsibility" (Armstrong); "Investigation of How Faculty Learn to Teach at a Distance with Technology" (Armstrong); "Examined Life" (Baird); "Dynamics of Adult Basic Education Instruction" (Beder, Medina); "Perspectives on Adult Learning" (Caffarella, Merriam); "Shaping Self-Disciplined Workers" (Carter et al.); "Relationship of Learning Strategy Preference and Personality Type" (Conti, Kolody); "Perspective Transformation Over Time" (Courtenay et al.); "Teacher Beliefs and Subject Matter Boundaries" (Dirkx et al.); "Grassroots Dissemination of Adult Education Research in Africa" (Easton, Capacci); "Reflection Plus 4" (Fenwick); "Homeplace--Not the Marketplace" (Gouthro); "Strategies of Successful American Indian and Native Learners in the Adult Higher Educational Environment" (Guerrero); "Why Adult Educators Should Be Concerned with Civil Society" (Hall et al.); "Adult Graduate Students' Perceptions of Gender and Race" (Hansman et al.); "Metaphors in Practice" (Hill, Moore); "Irreconcilable Differences" (Howell et al.); "Feminist Life Stories" (Jones-Ilsley); "Adult Meaning Making in the Undergraduate Classroom" (Kasworm); "Changing Languages, Cultures, and Self" (King); "Sense of Place and the Rural Adult Learner" (Kittredge); "Collaborative Ways of Knowing" (Lawrence, Mealman); "Role of Cultural Values in the Interpretation of Significant Life Experiences" (Lee); "Transformation Theory--Postmodern Issues" (Mezirow); "Educating Labor's Professionals" (Nesbit); "Informal Learning of Homeless Women" (Pearce); "Themes of Adult Learning and Development in Human Resource Development" (Peterson, Cooper); "Role of Adult Education and English Language Education in Nation-Building" (Pierson, Orem); "Analytical Framework for Cross-Cultural Studies of Teaching" (Pratt); "Missing the Beat" (Rowland); "Politics of Consumer Education Materials Used

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in Adult Literacy Classrooms" (Sandlin); "Living Outside the Circle" (Sessions); "Does Basic Skills Education Work?" (Smith, Sheehan-Holt); "Empowerment of Rural Zulu Women Through Popular Adult Education in South Africa" (Sosibo); "Poor Women's Education Under Welfare Reform" (Sparks); "Role of Language in the Preservation of a Culture" (Smoking); "Parents as People" (Tett); "Women Teaching for Social Change in Adult Education" (Tisdell); and "Recreated Selves" (Wilson Mott). (YLB)

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PROCEEDINGS

40th Annual

Adult Education Research Conference

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40th Annual Adult Education Research Conference

PROCEEDINGS

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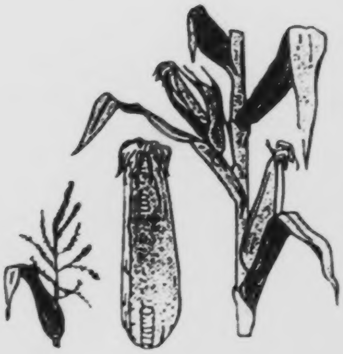

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Dear AERC '99 Participants:

On behalf of the steering committee, we welcome you to the 40th Annual Adult Education Research Conference. The 1998-1999 Steering committee in collaboration with Northern Illinois University planned what we believe to be an excellent conference both in quality of papers presented and the overall design of the conference itself.

AERC is a unique conference where adult educators from all over the world come to share their research. The conference has become a major forum for the advancement of the knowledge related to adult education and by participating in the conference you join a lengthy and proud tradition of inquiry and dissemination. Historically it is one of the most prestigious adult education conferences to which researchers present.

As a forum AERC cherishes a tradition of collegiality that embraces graduate students, faculty and practitioners in a culture of fellowship and research. Papers and symposia stand on merit, not on professional reputation of the author(s). As a record, this set of proceedings will be placed along side the other 39 volumes which trace the knowledge development of the field.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the considerable work and dedication of our hosts, Northern Illinois University. Each year AERC is hosted by a university willing to volunteer the necessary time, space and energy. We would like to thank Dr. Amy Rose along with Jim Fedenia and the other graduate students and staff who have worked hard to make this AERC a special experience for all the participants.

AERC Steering Committee

Juanita Johnson-Bailey	(1997-1999)	University of Georgia
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May 21, 1999

Dear AERC Participants,

We would like to take this opportunity to welcome you to Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. We hope that you will find this to be an exciting and stimulating conference.

I would like to thank the NIU Graduate Students who have put great effort into making this conference a success. They have been involved in all aspects of planning for this conference. Jim Fedenia, my Graduate Assistant for the past year, has worked to make sure that this conference comes off without a hitch. In addition, the committee of Ed Braaten, Max Elsey, Larry Reiner, Karen Solomon, and Vada Southern has met with me weekly to go over every facet of this conference. Tom Shindell from Northeastern Illinois University has also dedicated his time to helping us plan. His efforts are greatly appreciated. Other students who participated in the planning include: Chigozie Achebe, Virginia Carlin, Bobbie Cesarek, Margaret Collins, Regina Curry, Matt Hawkins, Pat Isaacson, and Dani Truty. Many other students are helping out the conference and I would like to thank them as a group.

Other people have also provided hundreds of hours of work. Paul Ilsley took over the work of the Social Committee. In a place like DeKalb, a committee such as this acquires special importance. Paul's work on this is particularly appreciated. Donna Smith has done a wonderful job of editing the proceedings. She graciously took over what promised to be a difficult task and has done a wonderful job. Finally, as with anything accomplished by the Faculty of Adult Continuing Education, Suzanne Royer and Linda White our valiant secretaries have gone way beyond the call of duty. They have typed, collated, faxed, and done anything necessary to support this conference. Jeanette Heinisch from the NIU College of Education's Office for External Programs has dedicated hundreds of hours on helping us navigate the bureaucracy. This conference could not have occurred without her.

We would also like to thank Gary McConeghy, Chair of the Department of Leadership and Educational Policy Studies for his support of this conference. Dean Alfonzo Thurman of the College of Education and Dean Jerrold Zar of the NIU Graduate School have both provided the Conference with financial support.

We hope you have a good conference. Let us know if you need our assistance.

Sincerely,

Amy D. Rose

Amy D. Rose
Site Coordinator

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Women's Transitions from Welfare to Paid Work and Education: Learning to Navigate the Systems

Cynthia Lee Andruske
University of British Columbia

Abstract: The purpose of this research is to highlight women's strategies for navigating their transitions from welfare to paid work and education.

Background: Within the North American context, governments, politicians, and the general public demand welfare roles be slashed quickly to reduce costs and "dependency." The response in the United States has been to implement workfare for welfare. Canada is beginning to follow the U.S. to reduce deficits and streamline social programs. In 1993, the British Columbia provincial government began its response through a Premier's Summit to create the Ministry of Skills, Training, and Labour by combining elements from the Ministry of Social Services, Ministry of Labour and Consumer Affairs, and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Training and Technology (Premier's Summit, 1993) to implement the Skills Now Program. In consultation with labour, education, business, and communities, government created Skills Now to meet the demands of the 21st Century so British Columbians would not be "excluded from full participation in the BC labour force because they do not have the right kind of skills demanded in today's labour market" (Year One Report, 1995, p. 3). To provide skills, training, or post-secondary education for the global and technological market, Skills Now sought to create a "seamless learning system" linking high school, workplace, post-secondary education, retraining in communities, and welfare to work force and education. However, government's new policy direction did not take into account other structures and systems that women on social assistance would need to navigate in order to take advantage of the seamless learning system.

Purpose: At first glance, a seamless learning system would appear to resolve access, relevance, cost, and accountability questions. It would also prevent drop out; promote life long learning; provide retraining for displaced workers; and integrate into the work force welfare recipients. However, a system attempting to be all things to all people, especially welfare recipients, and, in particular single mothers on welfare, may not necessarily take into account women's actual needs as they attempt to leave social assistance. For example, start up costs (clothing, extra food, and transportation) for work and education often strain women's already tight budgets, and government subsidies, when available, by no means cover the extra costs. Commencing in August, 1998, the BC government now requires that people, except mothers with children under 7, sign up for a government approved training program after attending an information session even **before** they may apply for welfare. Again, this policy discounts women's needs, for they may not have food or shelter, and they may be wasting time sitting in an information session, especially if their circumstances are dire. This just seems, in part, like another punitive measure directed against those in need.

As government requires attendance in some form of training or career program, more and more program providers appear in the community, often leading to duplication and program redundancy. Frequently, when mandated to enter these programs, women find their skills and needs are not acknowledged as they attempt to gain access to welfare monies in an effort to improve their lives and those of their children. To better understand how women leave welfare, I am exploring women's perspectives of how they navigate structures and systems in their attempts to make transitions from welfare to paid work and education. My goal is to listen to women's realities as they reveal strategies, dispositions, practices, or knowledge they learn in their transitions while navigating structures as active and creative agents, not as victims, to avoid welfare's "revolving door."

Theoretical Framework: Government policies, agencies, and pre-employment and training programs create tension between women's lived realities and systemic demands upon them. Often government agents and programs are caught in a tug-of-war between fulfilling government quotas and acting as advocates for women. Staff find themselves in a dilemma between taking clients most ready as opposed to those in most "need" who may benefit greatly from the programs. However, these women may not fulfil the statistical requirements of government in "getting a job - any job." Furthermore, government employees fluctuate between helping women by releasing information, creating "dependency," or disillusionment.

Agencies, programs, institutions, groups of women, families, friends, and support networks form different social fields. These may overlap. In their everyday lives, women occupy and operate within dynamic fields of forces or symbolic sites where collective symbolic struggles occur for position (Harker, Mahar, & Wilkes, 1990). According to Bourdieu (1977), within social fields, we learn "the rules of the game" to navigate systems and fields and find our places with dynamic social relationships. We enter into these social fields with cultural capital (education) and symbolic capital (status). We are admitted entry into the fields based on dispositions (manners, incorporated possibilities) we display and the types of "capital" we "possess." Also, we may be born into social fields and already have a disposition for certain types of behaviours and capitals. Within fields, individuals strategize for position and power depending upon the individual's set of dispositions (habitus), social capital (networks), cultural capital (education), and symbolic capital (prestige). Moreover, we know when someone belongs to our group, status, or class by virtue of mannerisms and language spoken. Individuals are stigmatized, kept out, or are made to feel uncomfortable within these groups through unspoken "rules of the game" or forms of symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1977). Bourdieu's theory of social practice provides a backdrop for understanding women's transitions from welfare to paid work and education.

Research Design: Since the purpose of my research is to explore women's transitions and learning within their everyday worlds, I am collecting data through thematic life history interviews. These include: welfare, education, work, family, children, and transitions. Life histories link women's lived and unlived lives, experiences, and relationships to social structures over time (Alheit, 1994; Bertaux, 1981). This approach highlights structural influences and women's abilities to plan their lives while instigating changes on institutions through dispositions they discover learning to navigate life experiences. Women's life histories provide a learning ground for their future transitions (Alheit, 1994). Individuals' life histories link their everyday experience and the ways they learn through their patterns of practice (Bertaux, 1981). These, plus social relations, are further connected to socio-structural relations of micro and macro structures. Institutionalized relations underlie socio-structural relations linked to individuals through social relationships bound across time, space, and embedded within historical time frames and events (Bertaux, 1981). Thus, life histories can link women's everyday subjective experiences to larger structural influences impinging upon them and may act as vehicles for individuals to observe self-transformation.

To explore these themes, I am interviewing women. However, the interviews are more similar to conversations where the interviewees become conversational partners (Rubin & Rubin, 1995). Unlike survey interviews, through conversational interviews, the interviewer and interviewee develop a more cooperative experience and "work together to achieve the shared goal of understanding" (p. 11) by exploring themes or emerging themes "to provide the thick description that builds toward an overall picture" (p. 11).

To date, since this work is still in progress, I have interviewed 5 women on welfare age 40 and older and 3 single mothers with children under age 7. I chose these women, for they often "fall between the cracks of programs" since pre-employment program criteria is written primarily for the 19 to 25 age groups. Trainers seem to prefer individuals in their thirties, so I have included this group in my study to compare their responses and needs with the others. So far 2 women in this age group have joined my study. To date, only 1 woman declined, after initially agreeing, to participate in my study, for she said,"My life is going really great now, and I just don't want to dredge up the past right now." The recruitment process is ongoing through snowball sampling where each woman suggests another participant. In the meantime, I am setting up interviews with another 10 women. My plans are to interview approximately 30 women (or less depending upon when information becomes saturated) for a year with follow-up interviews at 3 month intervals. I have chosen to follow women for a year to watch their process of transitions as they learn to navigate various systems and structures affecting their paths from welfare.

All women, except one, are mothers of at least one child. Two women grew up in very affluent homes while others grew up in low income working families. Only one woman was raised on welfare, and her mother later left welfare for paid work. Before resorting to social assistance, two women indicated that the combined income with a partner surpassed $100,000 a year, and another woman was quite well off. All women have a GED (General Education Diploma) or Grade 12, and 1 woman is one credit short of Grade 12, but she has attended college. Currently, 3 are enrolled in college (2 have student loans, and the other is on a special opportunities grant), 3 are working (1 collects a childcare subsidy, and 1 is on medical and dental benefits from welfare), and 4 are on assistance (2 of these are seeking disability, and 2 are working part-time on and off).

The recruiting process has been interesting and very time consuming. Initially, I invite women for coffee to explain my study, see if they are interested, and determine when I may make a follow up call to see if they will participate. Sometimes, I have had to make 3 or more appointments with women before we actually meet, for they are extremely busy as they continue their transitions from welfare by working, taking courses, or looking for work. Once I interview women, I transcribe the taped conversations and return the first one to them so that they may review it. To date, I have met with women for 1 to 3 intensive interviews to discuss the major themes of my research. During other interviews, we review my questions regarding previous interviews, new topics I have learned from other women, and "how's it going" for the women.

Findings to Date: Government agents and policymakers seem to believe that leaving welfare is as easy as attending a program, renewing or learning skills, desiring a job, and finding a job. However, from the initial transcribed conversations with women of their experiences attempting to leave welfare, these transitions are longer, more difficult, and more complicated than they or government might anticipate. Five themes emerged from the women's conversations with me illustrating how they begin to navigate their transitions from welfare: "just smile," "juggle the budget," "ask for permission," "know what you're entitled to," and "learning."

"Just Smile." According to Bourdieu (1977), individuals are stigmatized, excluded, or made to feel they don't belong through unspoken "rules of the game" or forms of symbolic violence to distinguish the social, cultural, and symbolic capital they possess. Many of the women I have spoken with feel this symbolic violence from some frontline staff as the women are "treated just like a number, just like an animal" as they are forced to wait in long line ups for their welfare checks, to ask a question, or to request a food voucher when they have no food. Often, they are told to go home and contact their workers by phone only to wait another day or two before the worker might have time to return the call. Also, the general public tends to impose symbolic violence on women through assumptions that "I'm a drug addict, alcoholic, a welfare bum, lazy," or "Just keep popping out babies." Little does the public know that before some women resorted to welfare to feed their children, they too came from comfortable middle class marriages.

Despite the humiliation and degradation of being on welfare, women try to overcome these feelings. One woman pointed out that the workers and clerks were "just trying to do their jobs." Some stated that some nice people can be found behind the counters although "It's not necessarily the people but just personalties, so I look past that" in order to maintain. Another woman commented that no matter how rude the person behind the counter is to her she tries to be nice, and "I just smile." This helps her cope and get what she needs for herself and her son.

"Juggle the Budget." Government wants women off welfare; however, if they go out to work, women may only keep 25% of what they earn, so financially they are not much better off. Money is extremely scarce, and no money is available for luxuries, such as brand name foods like Campbell's soup or Del Monte fruit. I was stunned to learn that women actually go hungry so that their children may eat. Additionally, their children are often discouraged from having peers over, for when children come over it means snacks must be provided. Sometimes these snacks are the family's meals. Again, symbolic violence occurs to cut people off from one another and stigmatize through less symbolically desirable foods, such as the name brands.

Since money is extremely scarce, women strategize how to survive. They must be very astute at determining the bargains. One woman told me that one brand of toilet paper may seem cheaper; however, "You must count the sheets of toilet paper because the two brands may not have the same number of sheets in the package although one is cheaper." Another maintained that it is hard to live on the "support" or food money, for often it must be reallocated for emergencies, a child's birthday, gas or transportation, or expenses for job preparation. Through juggling the budget, women manage to survive even though they may be hungry. However, women tell me that sometimes unforseen expenses force them to ask for a food voucher so that they and their children may eat. Often, women experience symbolic violence, for they are made to feel that they cannot budget their money if they are asking for what is deemed as "extra" food.

"Ask for permission." Probably one of the most humiliating forms of symbolic violence is when grown women must "ask for permission" to make a decision. For example, one woman wanted to take a course because she felt it would help prepare her to leave welfare. However, the worker made the woman research all sorts of other courses, run around town investigating them, and provide proof that the course would be beneficial before the worker "Gave me permission to take the course." Another woman pointed out: "They want control of every decision you make. It's emotional and financial blackmail because I have children to feed, so I must do what they say."

Women push back in subtle ways. For example, one commented, "I'm not going to give up and give them total control." Another conceded that "If they don't fill out the paper, it won't happen, so I hold my tongue because they have control." However, this woman says that despite having to hold her tongue, she ultimately gets what she wants which will help her leave the system. Women learn "the rules of the game" to get what they want, and they go on to learn their rights and entitlements as illustrated in *"know what you're entitled to."*

"Know what you're entitled to." Through their own research, reading pamphlets, networking with others, and other strategies, women mange to accrue social, cultural, and symbolic capital. They accomplish this by creating social networks with other women as well as through government agents, past job experiences, and advocates and mentors outside government where they obtain helpful information for navigating the system. For example, one woman had worked for Human Resources a few years before she had to resort to welfare. During that time, she acquired information and knowledge about financial entitlements that were not divulged to women. She was able to access some of these resources, for she had the strategies and cultural capital to do so. She commented: "It's not like I'm asking for anything I'm not entitled to if I go through the proper channels."

Another woman managed to establish some social networks with others in a welfare office when a promised check failed to come through to help her move into another house while her furniture was sitting on a front lawn waiting to be moved. While sobbing about her predicament in the welfare office, other recipients shared information and passed on the local Member of Parliament's telephone number and other authorities that could help her.

Additionally, many women acquire forms of cultural capital by educating themselves through research and reading about their rights and entitlements. Some have told me that most people ignore the brochures and pamphlets; however, these women pointed out that many of their rights and entitlements were available if people would just read the available information.

Finally, women earn symbolic capital, even if it is grudgingly given, by knowing their rights and entitlements. Another woman stated: "It's knowing the politics of the system. Nobody wants to share information. You have to play the system." Another woman told me that she had been trying to get information about the different disability acts. I passed on this information to her because I had finally managed to obtain the documents. The catch I told her was that a person had to know the exact title of the act or regulation that one wanted. Once she had this, her quest for the material would be easier. As time passes, women learn their rights and entitlements. Many indicated that they wanted to participate in my study so that their experiences could be shared with other women so that they would become aware of their rights and entitlements sooner.

"Learning." By strategizing, the women told me that they are learning to navigate the system. Through different programs, their dispositions are changing. For example, women pointed out that they were learning to communicate differently. They were learning to listen instead of interrupting people or being aggressive. They learned to look differently so that people would not stereotype them by their dress or appearance. Thus, their dispositions did not fit those of a woman on welfare. In fact, one woman was on welfare, and her friend was not; however, other people always thought the friend was on welfare because she looked unkept. Many of the women felt they were learning to budget even more effectively. Most of the women are learning that they are able to navigate the system to learn their entitlements and rights. Furthermore, they are learning "That's what you have to learn to do - play the game."

Overall, despite the challenges, stresses, and set backs, the women are learning to navigate the system by strategizing how to use their dispositions and through the acquisition or reawakening of different capitals. They are articulating the "rules of the game," and they are returning the symbolic violence they have endured by learning how to demand their rights and entitlements. It is a long, complicated, serendipitous, and courageous walk for the women from welfare.

Implications for Adult Education: One of the most significant contributions of my research is that the women's voices and experiences may be heard as they recount the impact government and educational policies have on their lives. Perhaps, too, my study will highlight the need to train government workers about the relationship between education and how they too are, in a sense a form of adult educator. Ultimately, my goal is to influence education, training, and government policies for women seeking to make transitions from welfare to paid work and education so that their needs will be examined holistically instead of just providing them with a "quick fix."

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Associative Ethical Dilemmas for Multicultural Sensitivity Assessment Derived from Adult Educational Theory

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Abstract. Adult educators promote non-formal assessment as demonstrated in their writings. Can tools then be developed that will gauge multicultural sensitivity? This paper examines that question, and personal, social, and legal implications of using multicultural sensitivity assessments for screening prospective employees, volunteers, and consultants for socially conscious groups, movements, and institutions.

Historical Development

As adult educators, the researchers for this paper have assessed the applicability of radical adult educational values useful for egalitarian sites, both formal and informal. We agree that most radical adult educational writers' words act as signposts for assumed adult educational values and behaviors (Brown, 1991). For the purposes of this paper, the adult educational views are largely derived from Henry A. Giroux, Stephen D. Brookfield, Robert Kegan, Phyllis Cunningham, Jack Mezirow, bell hooks, Paulo Freire, and Myles Horton. (These works fall within a common genre and have a common readership [amazon.com, 1999]). In a sense, these writings are not only an assessment of good adult educational values and behaviors, but they may act as an assessment of egalitarian adult education. Can a distillation of these adult educational values be made, and can they serve as a useful standard for assessing people working with disparate groups in society? If so, adult educational writings that act as leftist social critiques may demonstrate a model for ethical interchange in multicultural settings.

The goal of increasing multicultural environments, after the civil rights movements in the 1960s, encouraged programs aimed at minority access in most public, predominately white universities (Ford & Lang, 1992). Adult educators like Miles Horton were instrumental in establishing such programs. Similarly, the survey discussed in this paper (Timm, Armstrong, & Gutierrez, 1998) builds on those radical adult educational values and behavior supportive of minority access to higher education (Timm, Armstrong, & Gutierrez, 1995). In addition, in 1994 when the authors of this paper became the Committee for Mentoring Research, they began developing numerous tools for understanding the basis of assessing insensitivity to multiculturalism (Timm & Armstrong, 1995).

From 1994 to the present, the Committee for Mentoring Research recognized that an assessment tool usable by socially conscious adults or organizations could possibly fulfill a void in research. Although assessments of insensitivity to multiculturalism have been established, it was unclear if a mechanism for assessing the general public in any culturally sensitive organization or institution could be developed. Even though creating this type of measurement device is a possibility, would it be ethical to utilize it for screening purposes?

Literary Perspectives

According to Rachal (1989), adult education must be proactive; its "greatest social responsibility may well be a fostering of social tolerance and interdependence" (p. 6). It would follow then that when adult educators analyze issues of multicultural sensitivity assessment, they should take a multidisciplinary approach. Rachal further believes that "adult education . . . has a direct and symbiotic relationship with the environment in which it occurs" (p. 3). More specifically, Giroux and McLaren (1991) explain that adult education has a responsibility to make society better and, progressive education needs to fight against discrimination shown through unfair privileges and deprivation found in American society.

One solution to cultural exclusion is to increase partnerships between culturally diverse and mainstream people, thereby encouraging often excluded individuals to more freely participate in adult education in both formal and informal settings (hooks, 1994). However, neither the mainstream nor the culturally diverse may be willing to hear the contributions of the other. This is to say that members in either group could benefit from a cultural sensitivity assessment tool to improve interaction in our diverse society. To achieve these ends, these distilled principles can enhance the climate in diverse adult educational communities, organizations, and movements. If these distillations are used in a multicultural assessment, it is possible that this measurement could help to select activists based on their understanding of and appreciation for cultural diversity. However, educators must be responsible for investigating and critically understanding the deeper ethical implications for any assessment before its implementation.

Out in the field, leftist social critics both consciously and unconsciously chose participants based on an assumed personal rubric of social consciousness; although some variation in this process exists, close reading of radical adult education literature supports these values. Possibly for that reason, Horton and Freire's (1991) work was easily infused into the common vernacular of adult educational activists. It is as though an unwritten but understood assessment was already developed by such adult educators, one that contains the tenets of social activism for the individual, work/education, and society as a whole: proactive adult educators can intuit when a kindred spirit has similar tenets for social action. Understanding this united feeling is important in community-based adult education and popular education. As Hamilton and Cunningham explain, "Individuals are drawn together because of common concerns" (1989, p. 440). And, "only participants themselves can decide what is and what is not of common concern to them (Moshenberg, 1997, p. 88). Logically, adults would want to verify a person's commitment to "strengthening popular hegemony as a counterforce to the imposed silent oppression by the dominant culture" before sharing personal insights into their own social realities (Hamilton & Cunningham, p. 443). When major social risks are involved, knowing how a person stands on multicultural issues and oppression is imperative. After all, "without a shared vision of democratic community we risk endorsing struggles in which the politics of difference collapses into new forms of separatism" (Giroux & McLaren, 1991, p. 182).

It has been shown that leftist social critics naturally use an informal method for assessing multicultural sensitivity, which these researchers have made into a formal assessment instrument. This instrument, based on adult educational tenets, is necessary in traditional environments where cultural diversity is desired but where the existing staff may be resistant. The instrument is a diagnostic assessment that measures an individual's level of multicultural sensitivity (Vogel & Reder, 1998). Adults struggling to become more culturally sensitive generally have little insight into their own stereotypical views as many are unconsciously held. The goal is to eliminate "the subtle and not-so-subtle roadblocks to participation and creativity that exist" (Thomas, 1994, p. 61) when non-sensitive, culturally diverse adults interact.

However, some ethical considerations could be mentioned. First, no attitude can be measured without difficulty (Thurstone, 1928/1967; Likert, 1932/1970; Guttman, 1944/1967; Upmeyer & Six, 1989). No matter what method of assessment is being used, the exact location on a scale cannot be found because attitudes "are not static and fixed but rather are often growing and being adjusted" (Kahle, 1984, p. 41). In addition, as Allport (1935/1967) found, people possess many contradictory attitudes" (p. 12). Moreover, attitudes often change. Therefore, a previous study may not present a current depiction of the attitudes of any given group. In spite of these issues, many experts (Guttman; Henderson, Morris, & Fitz-Gibbon, 1987; Likert; Thurstone) believe that limiting attitude measurement to a scale is a reliable method. Still at this time, no universal ethical standard exists for using a multicultural assessment tool, which compels all radical adult educators to make decisions based on their particular sites and the utilization of all available knowledge.

Summary

Multiculturalsim is a social movement that radical adult educators have historically embraced. They know that a safer environment will result if people are more tolerant of diversity and if sites are more diverse. To achieve these ends, the researchers of this paper have incorporated eight major adult educational principles into their assessment instrument: transformation (Mezirow, 1991), participatory democracy (Freire, 1991), shared space (Giroux, 1997), critical reflection (Brookfield, 1995), transgression for personal freedom (hooks, 1994), social change (Horton, 1991), equity (Cunningham, 1989), and evolving self (Kegan, 1983). The researchers' instrument is currently in process and has shown initially that multicultural sensitivity can be assessed within the realms of U.S. society as a whole as well as in an individual's personal and social lives and in their employment.

Although adult educators tend to rally around the basic concepts of multiculturalism and strategies to eliminate oppressive practices, whether a sensitivity assessment would be a useful or forbidden tool in a particular context must be determined by each individual educator. Issues such as the following must be addressed: Can participants be accepted or rejected into membership either at a personal, social, or work level depending on the results?

This area of research is important because multicultural assessment, especially when based on the tenets of historically sensitive notions of adult educators, could be an invaluable tool for adult educators seeking a supplementary evaluative method for prospective participants in multicultural organizations and movements. This type of assessment could also aid adults in the quest to become more tolerant of diversity.

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Sustaining Commitment to Social Responsibility: Renewing the Ethical Basis of the Quality Agenda in the Education of Adults

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Abstract: This paper seeks to extend the notion of quality in higher education by considering the agenda for environmental sustainability and underlying ethical practices. Education institutions should be committed to the extended version of quality, and should not lose sight of the importance of commitment and social responsibility in the drive for a quality kitemark.

Extending Quality

The quality agenda for adult and higher education in the last decade or more has been set by the manufacturing and business sectors. In the process, the language and culture of adult, further and higher education have been transformed: students have become customers; learning has become a product, and education is measured in terms of outputs. The sector has been driven by the need to demonstrate efficiency, economy and effectiveness. Effectiveness - the focus on impact - has been measured in terms of short-term benefits (regardless of longer-term damage). The system of accountability has no patience for longer-term projects, or changes that invariably take generations to effect. This transformation has had an impact on both students and teachers in an environment that is characteristically competitive. Capitalist hegemony has sustained itself through the appropriation of not just human labor, but fundamental cultural values, to the point where adult educators have had to hide their radical agenda in the background in order to survive.

In an earlier AERC paper,[1] I argued that in this context, if we must have efficiency and effectiveness, then we should not be uncritically reactive, and that we should add a third 'E' - equity. In this paper, I shall provide evidence derived from my own research as well as from a reading of the literature and texts, from both the world of business and the world of education, to demonstrate that the time has come to add two more 'Es' - ethics and environment. We now have opportunities to reinvent the radical agenda. We are aware that environmental concerns have been incorporated into the capitalist agenda. We might be cynical in concluding that these are not ethical concerns based on basic human values, rights and responsibilities. Rather, there is recognition that capitalism depends on the exploitation of natural resources, and extraction without replacement threatens the substructure of the capitalist economy. Nevertheless, ethical businesses are at least wishing to appear to be taking the environment seriously, and whatever their initial motivation, the educative aspects of their concerns are leading to the production and implementation of ecological mission statements. Part of this concern is the dimension of ethical investment, as businesses and companies take responsibility to ensure that their investments are being utilized ethically without exploitation of cheap or child labor. These views have been incorporated as a social responsibility towards the local community, as part of the global economy.

Beyond ecology, there is an ethical human resource issue. An analysis of the literature reveals a refocusing on the well-being and development of the human resource. Again, we could be cynical about investment in people, but the evidence gives the appearance of a commitment to responsibility for workers and their families. Businesses and companies are (re) turning to benevolence. Rights and responsibilities extend to ensuring that workers are appropriately remunerated for their labor, that their working conditions reach increasingly higher standards, and job satisfaction is enhanced. In short, that the quality of life for workers and their families needs to be continuously improved. For those that do not work, opportunities need to be created to enable the same quality of life to be made available for all to make a contribution to community benefit.

An important element of the improvement of quality of life is a renewed emphasis on the encouragement of learning, not just in the interests of the economy, but for its own sake. In the so-called 'learning society' there has to be a culture which values all kinds of learning, and not just employment and job skills training.

Commitment to Environmental Sustainability

Unlike the demand for efficiency and effectiveness from without, there is a longstanding commitment to sustaining the environment within adult education. Courses in environmental science, conservation, countryside management, ecology have long been part of the curriculum of adult education in North America, Europe, Australia and New Zealand.[2] Whilst the research basis for this curriculum has a much longer history outside adult education, there have been research papers at adult education conferences which address 'green issues' and the need to commit the profession to raising awareness and engaging in (participative) action research to bring about environmental improvements. For example, at the 1990 SCUTREA Conference, a paper on European policies pointed to the responsibilities of adult educators to help their communities to 'cope with' environmental issues facing not just Europe but the rest of the world.[3] Five years later, Counihan drew the attention of the conference to 'the explosion in environmental professionalism' and the fact that much of this work was now taking place outside of the liberal tradition, but as part of continuing professional development. Paradoxically, he argued, this has led to only marginal success in developing renewable energy sources; indeed, in some areas of ecological concern - especially air and water pollution - there had been a continuing deterioration.[4] At the same conference, Knight argued for the need for scientists in adult education to support ecology and conservation issues, through environmental pressure groups: 'Continuing education has a key role to play in maximizing the effectiveness of a large non-professional input into the collection of scientific data, a vital part of the process of indicating nature conservation 'value.''[5] By working with volunteers, continuing education provides more than an opportunity for research data collection, but may encourage the participants to take greater control of the scientific process they are engaged in. Much community development work undertaken over an even longer time-span can be seen from within this framework (for example, tackling problems of soil erosion in order that communities in developing economies can sustain themselves and not be dependent on the developed world).

Typically, Europe and the UK are a decade behind North America in responding to trends and global issues. That was certainly the case in responding to both work-based learning and quality assurance. However, in looking at environmental concerns, the gap does not appear to be so significant; if anything, the rest of the world is slightly ahead of the United States on this front. At same AERC that I was arguing to extend quality to include equity, there was a paper by Matthias Finger and Roger Hiemstra which reported the findings of a survey on environmental adult learning. The footnote is significant as it points out that Finger is a visiting professor from Switzerland, and Hiemstra 'became involved as a consultant to help derive North American implications.'[6] There was very limited attention to environmental issues at subsequent issues. However, there was an interesting debate on the notion of Total Quality Management initiated by Fred Schied and his associates[7] This debate very much focused on the limitation of TQM in recognizing the need to show respect for people. This paper is arguing that the 'respect for people' needs to go beyond the human resource in the workplace, to the world communities.

At last year's AERC there were two papers on environmental concerns. The first was by Robert Hill,[8] examining how a grassroots, self-organized group of women ('housewives') took on a large corporation in a contest for cultural authority over an environmental pollution issue. The second was by Lilian Hill, who used the notion of global consciousness to recognize that a change is taking place in that 'the advent of new scientific knowledge and the overwhelming evidence of negative consequences including environmental degradation, displacement and exploitation of people, extensive pollution, and the dissociation of people from the community and the earth that sustains them.' Lilian Hill's position emphasized the significance of global consciousness in providing a means of understanding 'the degradation, the increasing poverty and displacement of people around the world alongside the increasing wealth for a few, backlash against immigration and minority rights, increasing fundamentalism, and many others ills visible today.'[9] The notion of global consciousness stresses the 'interdependence and connections with humankind and the earth'.

This view echoes that presented in a symposium on environmental adult education at the SCUTREA international conference in 1997. Papers by Budd Hall, Edmund O'Sullivan, Darlene Clover and Shirley Follen,[10] all from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, reinforced the need to recognize that the 'world is not OK' and that we as adult educators have a responsibility to engage in what is in effect 'transformative learning' and social action in order to improve the quality of life for the world's populations.

Contradiction and critique

The local and the global are in a contradictory and dialectical relationship with each other. Global issues need local strategies. To engage with issues of environmental sustainability requires both global awareness and local action. The notion of contradiction provides a framework for the analysis of the process of social transformation. In the past, the notion of care for the community and social responsibility has been appropriated by capitalist hegemony for shoring up enterprise and economy. Having transformed the values through analytic individualism, an emphasis on ecology, environment and ethics is now returning, with a concomitant renewal of social commitment through global consciousness.

The private and the public are in a contradictory and dialectical relationship with each other. Education, in the public sector, has had to engage with quality strategies that have emerged from within the private sector, with its own distinctive culture and values. This has stimulated resistance to, for example, ISO9000. The paradox is that in extending quality to include both environmental sustainability and ethics, we must continue to look to the private sector for direction.

What do Ben and Jerry's, McDonalds, 3M International, Body Shop International, Starbucks and Glaxo Wellcome all have in common? They all purport to be 'ethical businesses'. This means they have both an ethical policy and an ecological mission statement. It means that they undertake both ethical and environmental audits, and report the results publicly, using recognized social accounting procedures. It means they work in partnership with other ethical businesses, their customers and their own employees in order to ensure they deliver values. They uphold their values. They act responsibly in their local and global communities, and engage in practices that protect the environment and sustain ecology. It means that their quality perspective has been broadened out from efficiency and effectiveness, to consider issues of equity, ethics and environment. This will include not only ensuring that their employees have opportunities to engage in lifelong learning, but that their families are also considered in employment practice decisions (for example, changing hours of shifts, or being asked to work overtime), an awareness of where their banks are investing their funds, a consideration of where in the quality chain their raw materials come from and whether the workforce that produce them are being exploited, and whether in the extraction or production of those raw materials that the environment is being damaged. Profit ceases to be the main factor in their business planning. Ethical organizations are also concerned to ensure that they provide community benefits over and above the product or services they are set up to provide. In short, they must demonstrate that they are adding value.

In Britain, both the further and higher education sectors have responded to the 1992 United Nations's Agenda 21. A number of universities have now committed themselves to the HE21 document[11] that the previous and current British governments have encouraged following the 1993 Toyne Report and its government review in 1996. The fact that the emphasis is on 'education as a critical tool which can improve the capacity of people to address environment and social issues' does not necessarily align education (as opposed to educational) institutions to this agenda. After all, as I have argued elsewhere, education institutions rarely display the characteristics of 'learning organizations.'[12] However, some 25 British universities successfully bid in the Spring of 1997 to partake in the Environmental Action Fund - a two-year HE21 project to generate and promote best practice for sustainability across the higher education sector. A pre-condition for entering the HE21 partnership was senior management commitment to the project and its outcomes, which include developing appropriate curriculum specifications covering the core learning agenda for sustainability (in the areas of business, engineering, design and teacher education at undergraduate level) as well as an agreed set of sustainability indicators tailored to the HE sector.

A recent survey of 470 British Further Education colleges undertaken on behalf of the Association of Colleges in London in June 1998 found that of the 114 (24%) that replied, 61 (54%) had a formal policy on green issues, with a further eight (15%) stating that they were in the process of developing one. Around a quarter of the respondents provided evidence that they were integrating green issues into learning programs. Twenty-four colleges (21% of responses) stated that they were developing environmental and ethical sustainability within their key skills provision for all students. Their routine undertaking of environmentally-friendly practices, however, such as energy saving, waste disposal and recycling still had some way to go. New build policies at least reflected the government legislation on building standards.

In addition, there are a range of centers and other bodies committed to working in partnership with F/HE institutions towards environmental sustainability, such as Forum for the Future, the Centre for Social and Environmental Accounting Research, and SustainAbility which has an international profile. In the United States, the Associated Colleges of the South are renowned for their program of workshops on environmental studies, and other bodies such as Second Nature: Education for Sustainability and the Alliance for Sustainability through Higher Education are working with higher education to promote ethical and social accounting.

Commitment and responsibility, not kitemark

Whilst all this might seem encouraging, that both HE and FE sectors in Britain and North America have a degree of awareness of environmental sustainability issues, there are indications that, like the quality agenda, these concerns are superficial and driven by marketing - the desire for a kitemark that indicates to the world at large that they are quality institutions. The quality agenda lost its way when organizations allowed themselves to be driven by factors such as accountability and competition rather than the professional imperative to provide the best quality learning opportunities for students, to bring about direct and indirect community benefits, to e sound employers, and to contribute to the regeneration of the local, regional, national and international economy. For quality it was ISO9000. For environmental management systems it is IS014001 or the European Community's Eco-Management and Audit Scheme (EMAS). There are other alternatives such as the Council for Economic Priorities Social Accountability 8000 (SA8000) - the first auditable global standard for ethical sourcing.

It is the contention of this paper that the desire to extend quality beyond efficiency and effectiveness into equity and environment has an ethical basis that should make quality kitemarks unnecessary. Instead of investing resources into registration and consultancy fees, organizations committed to an agenda of social responsibility ought to be investing more in current and future human resources through the development of an extended quality culture. This requires a stronger focus on the ethical basis of intervention and practice, and the development of global consciousness. In North American adult education there has been a longer history of concern for the ethical basis of practice.[13] In Britain, this ethical practice has been understood to be an uncritical and unreflective acceptance of the distinctive basis of professional practice.

A critical perspective has to sustain the social transformation that is extending the quality agenda to include commitment and social responsibility, as well as inviting a discussion on what it means precisely to be an ethical organization. This analysis needs to be applied to providers of education and training opportunities. At the same time a critical review of recent policies and research on sustainable ecological improvements, and the role of education in promoting those issues will enable us to decide whether the possibilities of extending the quality agenda are a feasible and desirable way forward.

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An Investigation Of How Faculty Learn To Teach At A Distance With Technology: Their Strategies For Solving The Problem

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Abstract: This exploratory, qualitative research study sought to understand--from the faculty members' viewpoint--how they went about learning to teach at a distance with technology when not required to attend training. Findings point toward the importance of institutional context and indicate that some developmental process is occurring.

Introduction: The exponential growth of distance education--using instructional technology--in higher education is evidenced by the proliferation of undergraduate and graduate courses and programs, continuing professional education opportunities, and business and industry training modules that are offered on-line, by two-way audio and video, audiographics and other forms and combinations of instructional technology. Green and Gilbert noted already back in 1995, that "the changing demographics of higher education's clientele--the growing population of non-residential, part-time, older students--will continue to make distance education an attractive option" (p. 17). The move by institutions to offer distance education courses and programs has required that faculty members adopt the medium(s); adapt, revise or create new courses and programs; and, excel as teachers in the new technology-rich environment of distance education. Therein lies the problem, how do faculty learn to master teaching and facilitate student learning in an (almost) totally new environment where the "rules" of teaching and learning are different than face-to-face in a classroom, and especially when faculty are not required to participate in or attend faculty development activities or training prior to their teaching at a distance.

Theoretical Framework: The following topics--distance education, faculty development, and adult learning--were included in the literature review for this study, providing the conceptual framework for design and a grounding for understanding and interpretation of the data. Distance education provided the context of the study and numerous authors such as Gilbert (1995), Lewis, Alexander, and Farris (1997), and Walsh and Reese (1995) have addressed how significant distance education courses and programs can be to an institution. Along with distance education's emergence, the call for more training or faculty development (continuing professional education-CPE) for faculty members teaching at a distance was being echoed by many associated with distance education (Burke, 1994; Cyrs, 1997; Furiga, 1996). As a result, the literature on traditional faculty development, CPE and more recent literature pertaining to faculty preparation and use of instructional technology was reviewed. Dillon and Walsh (1992) reviewed five distance education journals and the Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC) locating just 24 research studies on faculty and issues concerning faculty participation in distance education. Of those studies, nine focused on faculty training programs addressing the skills required for distance teaching, teaching styles of distance teachers and the training needs of faculty. None of the studies they reviewed addressed faculty members' learning about how to teach at a distance from the learner's perspective. Since their literature review, many more articles have been written about faculty training programs--primarily workshops or summer institutes--however, no research studies were found concerning how faculty--as professionals in their natural, (albeit, formal academic) vocational learning environment proceeded to learn how to teach at a distance with technology (i.e. solve a similar "problem"). The last topic reviewed began with adult learning from the perspective that faculty members are professionals engaged in self-directed CPE as adult learners in their workplace. Theories about adult learning were examined (Houle, 1961; Knowles, 1980; Knox, 1980; Tough, 1967, 1979; and others) as well as the concept that gender may play a role in explaining differences in teaching and learning (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger & Tarule, 1986).

Research Design: This study was significant because it addressed theoretical and practical issues of a specific category of adult learners, full-time faculty members at traditional, residential four-year undergraduate and graduate institutions. The process by which faculty members continue their professional development in order to learn about a specific topic is a little studied subject and in addition, addressing how or if the learning process or strategies change for different stages of experience, had not been addressed. As a result, because very little literature links faculty members' (as adult learners) CPE in their work environment with a new medium of teaching an exploratory, a qualitative approach was taken with this study. With this approach the researcher sought to gain a more holistic understanding of the context and process(es) faculty members experience in their continuing professional development as teachers at a distance. The exploratory, qualitative methodology deemed most appropriate used a constant-comparative analysis of the data to generate substantive grounded theory (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

These research questions--reported on here--were part of a larger study:

1. How do faculty members proceed to learn to teach at a distance?
2. What criteria do faculty members employ in selecting and using resources?
3. How do faculty members evaluate the content and process of their learning about teaching at a distance?
4. How might faculty members continue their learning in the future?

After a pilot study, semi-structured, conversational telephone interviews were conducted with a purposeful sample of 28 faculty members spread among four institutions. Faculty members were selected based on their experience with distance teaching (experienced, novice, or beginner), academic rank, discipline, and gender. Although the researcher did not set out to pick a purposeful sample that was representative of the larger faculty member population (in the United States) it was interesting to compare in retrospect, how closely the purposeful sample selected did reflect the larger faculty member population. In addition to faculty members, the researcher also interviewed one to two individuals with administrative and/or instructional design responsibilities in distance education at each institution in order to receive a more complete picture of distance teaching and learning at that institution.

Faculty members were chosen from institutions which did not require, however had available, formal training opportunities pertaining to distance teaching with technology within the year prior to the time of the study. At least five faculty members at each institution were interviewed. The telephone interviews were taped and transcribed, and a constant-comparative analysis of the data used for naming phenomena, and developing categories and the coding manual. An interrater reliability procedure was also done to enhance dependability. Data reduction was facilitated using various strategies (Miles & Huberman, 1984) and a general learning process began to emerge.

Findings and Conclusions: Reducing hours of interviews and hundreds of pages of text was not an easy task. Keeping this in mind, the researcher presents for the reader a few highlights of this study emphasizing the strategies (methods) and resources for learning which this group of adult learners used and what effect their distance teaching experience may have had on this process.

While individual faculty members use different strategies and resources to learn, the institutional context plays a key role in facilitating what methods and assistance are used. Their institution (local learning environment) is primarily responsible for providing the resources--assistants (people), indirect or non-human resources and materials--which provide the channels by which faculty members locate, find and use human and non-human resources as sources of information and support. Almost all participants (faculty members) in this study turned to assistants (people) to facilitate their learning. In addition, participants also overwhelmingly preferred to use people as their main resource or source of information.

The criteria that participants used in selecting resources in this study centered around four main themes. First, participants overwhelmingly selected resources that were locally available, readily visible (easy to find), and abundant. The second criterion was closely related to the first in that the resource had to be accessible and easy to get. These two criterion are similar to what has been reported in the literature. The third selection criterion--content--had three sub-components to it. When selecting a resource for its content, participants may have been seeking general information, particular expertise, and/or selected that resource because of the currency of information contained within it.

The last major selection criterion was that by selecting and using that resource, there was a personal benefit to the participant. Two things are particularly interesting about this last finding. First, that over time, as participants gained experience, the frequency with which this was mentioned as a selection criterion diminished. In addition, although the overall frequency diminished with experience, more women than men continued to use it as a basis on which to select a resource. Secondly, when the researcher reviewed the raw data that this category arose from, the criteria as stated by the participants were reflective of the characteristics given in the literature for competencies and qualities desired of a helper or assistant such as being an effective communicator and a good listener, having some subject matter expertise, and interpersonal skills such as warmth, empathy, authenticity and sincere interest in the learner (Candy, 1991; Tremblay, 1983 cited in Candy, 1991). It would appear then that amongst the selection criteria for people who serve as resources, not only is technical expertise or information desired, but that the qualities inherent in being a good helper or assistant in learning are a basis for selecting and using that individual as a resource. That the participants might "outgrow" this need (selection criterion)--for the support an assistant or helper provides as they gain experience--is worthy to note because a gender difference appeared to exist, with more women continuing to include this as a selection criteria even though they became more experienced.

When participants turned to off-campus resources they did so for several reasons: (a) to seek general information about distance education, (b) to find examples of distance education courses, and (c) seek expertise on an issue or topic. In addition, experienced participants turned to off-campus resources as a means by which to compare their experiences with others and locate people similarly engaged in distance teaching with instructional technology. That participants--as they gain experience--turn to off-campus resources is probably reflective of their increased familiarity with the field and being better able to direct their own learning.

However, even if resources are available--either locally or off campus (e.g. on the Internet)--it is how the faculty member perceives the accessibility of the resource(s) which influences whether he or she pursues multiple or limited (few) learning strategies. In general, if there is an abundance of local resources present or perceived to be readily available, visible and accessible for a faculty member to use then he or she will use multiple learning strategies in preparation for teaching at a distance. However, if few local resources are found or perceived to be present, the faculty member will limit his or her learning strategies to just a few methods. This perception of resources (which may include support) appears to be a key factor in moderating the quantity (variety) of learning strategies subsequently chosen.

Faculty then choose and use a variety of different learning strategies (methods) prior to teaching their first course, however, most depend on the actual teaching experience as the primary method of learning. While this learning by doing is occurring, individual faculty may engage in a variety of assessment methods such as self, student, and peers; feel the need to currently engage in additional or different learning strategies; be stimulated to seek additional resources or make changes involving aspects of his or her teaching, the instructional design or the technology in use.

Learning strategies used--other than learning by doing--included formal learning activities (e.g. workshops), reading, tutoring, learning from others' experience, collaborating, reviewing, watching, reflecting, engaging in related learning, and other miscellaneous methods. Beginners, as a group, did not chose watching (observing) as a learning strategy. Participants who talked about engaging in reflecting as a learning strategy were more likely to be beginners or novices as they thought and talked about planning and teaching their course. Novices used the widest variety of learning strategies as they were preparing to teach their first course at a distance. Participation in related learning strategies diminished with increasing experience such that experienced participants did not mention engaging in related learning activities. Learning from others' experience was an important strategy across all sub-categories of experienced participants and where formal learning strategies were engaged in, the less likely it was that the participants used tutoring as a strategy. The strategy of watching (observing) was used more by men, however the women reviewed video tapes of their teaching and invited observers into their classrooms whereas, the men did not.

One condition--in addition to the presence of multiple resources--which appeared to affect whether or not a faculty member continued his or her learning using multiple strategies after teaching his or her first course at a distance, was whether or not he or she pursued teaching at a distance using a different instructional technology. If multiple resources were not available or perceived as such, and a different instructional technology was not used, then faculty appeared to resort to using only a few learning strategies--primarily relying and planning on formal learning activities (workshops)--as the means by which they did and anticipated that they would continue their learning about teaching at a distance. Furthermore, faculty who had only taught one course and did not know when they might teach at a distance again reported and anticipated using just a few learning strategies regardless of resource availablity. The primary method identified for future learning of these participants was through formal activities (i.e. workshops).

It is difficult to say that faculty have "learned" how to teach at a distance because of the changing student population, rapid advances in instructional technology, and the continually expanding body of knowledge in any given discipline. As such, there is theoretically no "end" to their learning project--assuming the faculty remain interested and motivated to learn in this field--

however, practically speaking, if they are no longer teaching at a distance it is difficult to imagine that they will actively continue to pursue learning in this field.

As some faculty proceeded in their learning project--from beginners to very experienced instructors--there was evidence of professional development over time. For example, an increasing awareness of their learning process including how they use their resources. For more experienced participants, the questions to which they were seeking answers were different and no longer at the technical, how-to level. They became more interested in sharing and comparing their experience with others, not too dissimilar to the means and accepted practice by which faculty share new knowledge in their disciplines through conferences, publications and other public forums. In addition, it appears to take time for faculty to get involved in using instructional technology to teach at a distance; and, then repeated practice is necessary for them to demonstrate proficiency and comfort in distance teaching.

These faculty participants relied heavily on learning by doing (teaching the course) and it is in the "doing" that they primarily assess the quality of their learning. This was done mainly through evaluation of student outcomes supplemented by student feedback (formative and summative) about the course. Very few participants were able to talk about and assess their own learning process(es) and the content which they found necessary to learn, independent of what the student outcomes were.

In summary:

1. The number (variety) of different learning strategies (methods) used appears to be directly related to the availability, accessibility, variety and visibility of resources in the faculty member's local institutional environment as perceived by the faculty member.
2. Faculty place a heavy emphasis on the importance of learning by doing.
3. Faculty base their learning success primarily on the resulting student outcomes supplemented by student evaluations (formative and summative).
4. After teaching their first course at a distance with instructional technology, faculty members who switch to a different instructional technology mode to teach a subsequent course appear to use multiple learning strategies as long as there are multiple, readily accessible local resources.

Implications for Theory and Practice: Understanding the relationship between finding and using local resources that are abundant and accessible--particularly the important role people play--and how faculty members' preferences for learning strategies change with experience is important in providing resources as well as in developing programs and materials to support faculty learning. Furthermore, with the emphasis that faculty place on learning by doing, continuing support while they are in the process of teaching should facilitate and encourage more reflective practice on the process of distance teaching and facilitate assessment of their personal learning in addition to assessing it in terms of student outcomes. Few faculty had any interaction with distance education support staff or other faculty about their course while teaching it at a distance. Follow through during the course--whether initiated by the faculty member, an experienced distance teaching mentor, or the distance education support staff--should be an integral part of the process of distance teaching and time be allotted for this interaction between support staff, peers, and the faculty member.

The formative role that the context (institution) plays in shaping faculty CPE is reflected in who is available locally to help and facilitate faculty learning and direct them to additional resources. This investment in human capital--in addition to the hardware and software of instructional technology--is becoming an even more critical element in the success of distance education as institutions expand their offerings. Lobbying administrators for additional support and including sufficient funding in budgets and grant proposals to facilitate hiring faculty development personnel with expertise in instructional technology, instructional designers and technical experts will help address the need of faculty to use people as their primary source of information and as a channel through which to find additional resources.

The effect of an individual's self-directedness in learning to teach at a distance with instructional technology is influenced by experience, institutional (workplace) context and other factors which reflect the difficulty in developing any unifying explanation of how faculty--as professionals and adult learners--learn to teach at a distance with instructional technology. While the literature in adult and self-directed learning would seem to indicate that faculty should (and could) be highly self-directing, more often than not, this is not the case. Studying how highly educated professionals go about solving a new and similar "problem" in a variety of contexts could generate helpful insights in how to facilitate CPE in other different, yet similar contexts. Repeating this study--or particular aspects of it--in historically Black and/or Native American institutions and with different comprehensive and land-grant institutions would help address this issue.

There appear to be key aspects for faculty in the process of learning to teach at a distance with technology: institutional and personal factors, resources and strategies, learning by doing, and continuous learning through the use of new instructional technologies. However, this exploratory, qualitative research study only brushed the surface of this topic and highlighted additional potentially interesting areas and relationships to study in-depth. Studies are needed to understand the faculty member's assessment of his or her learning and how he or she monitors it. In particular, the effect and role that student performance and student evaluations play in assessing faculty learning (by self and others) could be a promising and interesting avenue of research into the teaching/learning transaction where the students may or may not mirror the faculty member's success in learning to teach.

In addition, investigating how faculty development can facilitate and guide faculty into becoming autonomous learners (self-directed learners) as well as reflective practitioners is worthy of future research. Longitudinal studies of individual faculty from when they initiate their learning project through several years or multiple distance courses may facilitate and aid understanding of this developmental process as well as address the discrepancy between how people say they want to learn in the future and what they may actually do to learn regardless of how they have gone about learning in the past.

And finally, more in-depth study should be done on the institutional context in which faculty members initiate their learning. Studies focused on the institutional setting may be better able to elicit what the key channels, resources or nodes of information are and how they are used by faculty members. Improved understanding of the setting may facilitate increasing faculty participation (initiating this learning project); promote, encourage, and support the transition from beginner to experienced distance instructor; and, the role which promotion, tenure, rewards or grants play in faculty member participation in teaching at a distance with instructional technology.

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The examined life: A study of identity formation, agency, self-expression among imprisoned women

Irene C. Baird

Abstract: This study demonstrated the efficacy of a Freirian/humanities-based adult education program on identity formation, agency and empowerment through self-expression within the context of a women's group in a county jail.

> *We must meet the prisoner as a person and listen to her story. As she speaks about her life and her experience of prison, a human face is suddenly superimposed over the mind-numbing figures. (Chesney-Lind, p.8)*

Introduction

Corrections facilities identify incarcerated women by their prison I.D. numbers; society defines them as a threatening statistic and negative demographic factor. Within adult education, there is even a perception that the status of incarceration, given the statistics and demographics, generates a "universal" composite and denies agency (Clark etal., 1998). Noting, among others, critical race feminist Harris' belief that essentialisms (composites) "reduce the lives of people who experience multiple forms of oppression" (1997, p. 11), this study sought to involve groups of incarcerated women in an educational program in which the women defined themselves and their realities. The purpose was to examine the impact of a Freirian/humanities-oriented medium on identity formation, agency and empowerment through self-expression. Lacking adequate resources within adult education, the study turned primarily to current criminal justice feminist and womanist researchers who are equally critical of the creation of a single incarcerated woman's voice and experiences as representative of all within the group (Harris, 1997; Hill Collins, 1997; Owen, 1998; Watterson, 1996). Although these studies provide substantive information on the causes and conditions of incarceration, they highlight the lack of programming that promotes identity formation and provides techniques for successful transition to the outside (Newman, Lewis, Beverstock, 1993; Rafter, 1982; Watterson, 1996). In addition, therefore, Freirian theory was consulted because it addressed the issue of the "silenced" oppressed and, through praxis, the finding of voice and empowerment in the process of identity formation.

Methodology

The Freirian/humanities-oriented learning model, a 1992 pilot project with homeless women, has been implemented at a county jail since 1994 (Baird, 1999, 1997a, 1997b, 1994). It involves facilitating, in ten week segments, forty sessions annually, each lasting one and one-half hours. An average of twelve women volunteer to participate. During each meeting, the participants read poetry and prose selections of established female authors of similar race, class and experience. The Freirian concept of reflection and discussion for meaning-making follows, with each woman using the author's experiences as the link for exploring and examining her own. This process generates themes for further discussion. The relevant themes are then reinforced through creative self-expression which is published in a booklet for the women at the conclusion of each ten week segment. The entire process of self-reflection provides them with a non-threatening opportunity to define themselves and their worlds. The visual impact of their voice in print promotes self-esteem, a sense of pride and empowerment.

Since this is now an established learning program at the county jail, the women learn, by word of mouth or by having read other participant's books, the purpose of the program and its encouragement of their selecting authors, books and/or issues of their choice. During the course of this study, the participants (7 black, 6 white, 1 Native American between the ages of 19 and 40) elected to engage in a personal inward journey since many of them were spending cell time writing their stories for themselves, their children or their families. Included in the reading selections were excerpts from bell hooks' reflections on writing autobiography; Maya Angelou's *Gather Together In My Name* which covered her late teens, her struggle for survival, identity and agency development; and Nikki Giovanni's poem, "Make Up" with its references to using make up for a variety of reasons but "before the public is faced [and] .... to face life." Data were gathered from individual evaluations, interviews of seven volunteers and the women's writing which reflected on the outcomes of their own self-exploration exercise. In addition, because these groups of women seemed especially involved in identity issues and were influenced by the Giovanni poem, they requested materials to draw their own masks. Identity formation, exercise of agency and empowerment through self-expression prevailed as the dominant themes that emerged from the analysis.

Identity

Hill Collins (1997) states that the primary responsibility for defining one's own reality lies with the people who live their reality, who actively have those experiences. Feminist corrections research concurs (Belknap, 1996; Chesney-Lind, 1997; Owen, 1998; Rafter, 1982; Watterson, 1996) as do the results from this study. Although there was a similarity of causes for incarceration, there was diversity of "when, why and how" the individual became a correction's statistic, how her culture, personal history and persona influenced the way she handled a situation. As examples, one woman provided a succinct account of how she and the authorities resolved a domestic violence incident: "Abusive man I was with said he love me ... didn't see it that way, he end up in the hospital, I end up in jail." Another woman who related to Maya Angelou's resorting to even questionable means of survival in her youth, honestly admitted, "I sell drug for money so that I can take care of my children."

The women did not operate in isolation. As a group they worked through similarities each one found between herself and the authors; however, they did resent being considered as a composite. They spent one entire session addressing a question one of them raised, that of whether they were **on** or **in** the same boat. The **on** side prevailed as they voiced their intent to express their individuality whether in their mechanisms and/or strategies for coping, their value system, their creative writing, mask or hairstyle. What emerged from these activities is an equally diverse outcome of their efforts in identity formation. One woman wrote that she saw herself through others. Another referred to herself "as a walking number, a confused individual ... someone's friend, someone's enemy and sometimes someone's disappointment." A few indicated that a self-exploration opened wounds and pain. "... my [inward] journey ... will be a difficult one. For unlike most, I have to go back through my pain and disasters to move on." Alternatively, there was one who was not ready to deal with the inward journey yet, but felt that the process was a necessary first step.

I'm scared to face the real me
being someone else for so long
I don't know who to be
I have more faces than Bozo the clown ...
Being me isn't like the drop of a dime.

There were examples of positive assertions of selfhood. Some include, "I'm a beautiful black woman standing tall and strong ... your the person that wants to see me fall [but] just like Maya still I rise." Another woman wrote, "I am powerful. I am strong. I am mother. I am lover. I am me." There is even evidence of wit in the following:

My style is so unique
I guess that's how I got my name
I am in all ways a woman
there's none like me the same

I speak with clear distinction
none can emulate my talk
my 6 foot frame belongs to me
and no one can stroll my prideful walk

My voice is built to suit me
there's not another voice like mine
everything that I'm compiled of
what makes me so divine

My wit is one-of-a-kind
there ain't a soul like me
my style is all my own
I grew into my divinity

I am so proud to be a woman
I have strength, peace and joy
this woman you see is so unique
praise God I wasn't born a boy

These last, positive reflections offered by black women are reminiscent of one of Alice Walker's definitions of "womanist" which includes: *Loves* the spirit. Loves love ... Loves struggle. *Loves* the Folk. Loves herself. *Regardless* (1983, xii). For black women's identity formation, the womanist perspective as defined by Walker here and in the section on agency begs further study.

Agency

The literature medium, especially the positive, strong messages in Angelou and hooks, was effective in generating discussion in group sessions, in evaluations and interviews on the exercise of agency. The women's responses were consistent with findings in current feminist corrections research (Belknap, 1996; Owen, 1998, Watterson, 1996). Several drug addicted women spoke of their inability to handle their habit and exercised agency by deliberately putting themselves in situations where they would be apprehended, hoping incarceration would provide them treatment. Others, for whom life became too overwhelming, made a similar decision. The county jail, they said, gave them food, clothing, a roof over their heads and time to reflect on the complexities of their lives, on how they could resolve them.

Wrote one woman, "By me going to jail help me to do the right thing. I've learned to think now with my head instead of my heart." Irrespective of demographic factors, there were women who admitted to choosing to live "on the edge;" they were exercising agency by involving themselves in high-risk activities, fully aware of the consequences and certain punishment for such decisions. Some of them were recognized for their "smarts," for being able to get things done within the facility. There was a polarity between those who were conforming merely to do "easy time" and those who expressed a firm will to change. In both cases they exercised agency by volunteering to participate in learning and/or rehabilitation programs, with different outcomes in mind. It was an individual choice.

Other areas of choice, of exercising agency, involved relationships. In this particular jail, the women are confined to their cells twenty one hours daily. Some choose to isolate themselves except for attending the learning program. They admitted to not trusting anyone, especially other women. Others talked about a need for community. Knowing the punitive measures that could be incurred if detected, they form pseudo-family relationships with each in a"community" assuming a different role: father, mother, brother, sister, others. Some studies suggest that this may be an effort to exercise autonomy and control; others feel that this is a survival mechanism. There is debate about whether these are sexual situations which are totally unacceptable to corrections (Belknap, 1996; Owen, 1998). Another insight for consideration is the following extension of Walker's "womanist" definition: "A woman who loves other women, sexually and/or nonsexually. Appreciates and prefers women's culture, women's emotional flexibility (values tears as natural counterbalance of laughter), and women's strength. Sometimes loves men, sexually and nonsexually. Committed to survival and wholeness of entire people, male and female" (1983,p.xi).

For some women, the literature afforded a medium for mental liberation, an escape in spite of their confinement. They considered this a very empowering exercise of agency. bell hooks wrote, "Living as we do in a white-supremacist capitalistic patriarchal context that can best exploit us when we lack a firm grounding in self and identity, choosing 'wellness' is an act of political resistance" (1994, p. 452). Two different excerpts exemplify her words. "I describe [jail] as a journey through the twilight zone. This place is crazy. I had to fight hard within myself to use it as a place to improve myself and stay strong. I also learned I do have a lot of strength within myself." The following is from a nineteen year old:

You tell me "line up, so of course
I get in line
You punch in, you punch out, but me?
I'm doing time
You push the buttons to open
the doors I'm behind
but one thing you can't change is
my freedom of mind

So, yes, while I'm here I'll stand
in your line
I'll follow your rules while I'm
doing my time
But I look in at you from these
bars I'm behind
because, locked in or not, I have
freedom of mind.

Empowerment Through Self-Expression

Freirian theory and humanities philosophy were an appropriate foundation for this study in that they encouraged the incarcerated women to find and use their own voices to define themselves. As a prescription for social action, Freire provided illiterate peasants with a medium for liberating themselves from their oppressors, that of reading and writing using their own words. In his methodology, the praxis - reflection and action - is a problem solving technique for the learners to look at their reality and to find and define their own word. The humanities reenforces this approach with its similar philosophy of looking at and defining one's self and one's community, in this case through the literature of women of similar race, class and experience.

The creative output of the incarcerated women is tangible evidence of their accepting what Hill Collins (1997) calls primary responsibility for defining their realities, their experiences. Through praxis these women identified the many ways they exercised agency in spite of restraints. Their evaluations confirmed the sense of pride, of self-esteem in their accomplishments; it also empowered them when they recognized that they now had techniques that inhibited anyone's "messing with my mind," to quote one of the participants.

To those committed to social justice/social action, this process appears to be too "self" focused. This was discussed in group sessions, but especially during the interviews. The women maintained that they must first identify and accept themselves in a positive way in order to be of benefit to their families , to be contributing members of society. This is supported by Hill Collins' contention that "... self-definition is key to individual and group empowerment" (1997, p.254). They pointed out that the process was effective because interaction - the reflection and dialogue - was necessary to consider varying perspectives before they could work through their many masks to find the "authentic" self. They added that the process continued in their cells, between sessions. Those whose writing focused on incarceration, on what they experienced, knew that their stories would be disseminated and read. They took that risk (exercising agency); although there was a therapeutic element in so doing, they also wanted to inform the outside community and "educate" other females who are at risk of incarceration. One woman shared that she did this deliberately for a daughter who is approaching her teens, to teach her that there is a better way to live than her mother's. These responses affirm bell hooks' statement that "when we lack a firm grounding in self and identity, choosing 'wellness' is an act of political resistance" (1994, p. 452).

Implications

Just as incarceration has been considered a male issue, with facilities, operation and studies viewed from that perspective, so also has been adult education's perspective. Marginalized women are the invisible, the silenced in adult education literature, as evidenced by the need to turn to feminist corrections and womanist research as the literature framework for this study. In adult education, the tendency is to involve primarily white, middle class women, often students, as research participants, thus widening the gap in the adult education knowledge base (Cunningham, 1997; Hayes & Flannery, 1997). The underscored implication from this study is that if adult education is really about social change and truly empowering marginalized women, then adult educators need to be inclusive, need to listen to the stories of the marginalized women of all races/ethnicities and need to develop programs with the women that will allow them to take control of their lives. Then, to use hooks' words, their "ground[ing] in self and identity," their "wellness" will empower them and their community.

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The Dynamics of Adult Basic Education Instruction

Hal Beder, Patsy Medina

Abstract: This presentation reports the results of a classroom dynamics study of adult literacy education in which twenty adult literacy classes were observed twice in seven states. For each observed class, teachers were interviewed. Students were interviewed when possible. The overriding theme was classroom culture, defined as the socially patterned human thought and behavior that takes place in adult literacy education classrooms.

Introduction

In the United States, the federally-funded adult basic education program is the primary mechanism for serving the approximately 40 to 44 million adults (Kirsch et. al., 1993) who are in need of basic literacy education. Although from the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) (Kirsch et. al, 1993) and the National Evaluation of the Adult Education Program (NEAEP) (Young, et. al, 1994) we know a great deal about adult literacy education programs and their learners, we know very little about what happens in adult literacy education classrooms. Indeed, a literature search uncovered but two studies of classroom dynamics. One was a small-scale study (Collins, 1992). The other was a large-scale, comprehensive study of classroom dynamics (Mezirow, Darkenwald & Knox, 1975) but that study is over twenty years old.

Methods

The present study is a descriptive analysis of the classroom dynamics of twenty adult literacy education classrooms. Research sites were selected to maximize program and learner diversity, and to that end, classes were selected to represent each of 18 characteristics which previous research had shown to be "shaping variables" of adult literacy instruction [e.g. geographic location, program type, urban/suburban/rural, instructional level of the class etc.]. Classes were selected in seven states. For each class, data were collected on four occasions. First the class was observed by a trained observer. Then the teacher was interviewed. A second observation followed and finally students were interviewed when possible. The teacher interview was open-ended and was focused on the first observation in order to gather data about the teacher's intentions for and perceptions of the class observed. The interview also gave the observer an opportunity to discuss with the teacher any episodes in the observation that needed clarification in respect to their meaning or purpose. After each data collection, detailed and comprehensive field notes were completed. All interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Data were analyzed using a grounded theory methodology. First, after thoroughly studying the over seventy sets of field notes which were 15 to 20 pages in length, a preliminary set of thematic categories was identified by the researchers. These categories were primarily descriptive of classroom dynamics and interactions. Then the field notes were entered into the NUDIST computer program for qualitative analysis. Starting with the preliminary categories, three researchers then coded the data and in the process identified new themes and refined and elaborated the initial themes. Periodically the coding of the three analysts was merged using the QSR Merge Computer Program and categories were collapsed, renamed, and expanded as necessary. To further refine the analysis, word searches were conducted and the results coded and analyzed.

The NUDIST analysis was essentially a "bottom-up" approach to data analysis which had the advantage of being very systematic and of allowing us to retain virtually every data segment in the analysis pool. There was a disadvantage, however: Because data were collected by over five data collectors, the researchers conducting the analysis were not familiar with the overriding context of the classes except for what they read in the field notes. Consequently, when data segments were dis-embedded from the over 1000 pages of field notes in NUDIST coding, the holistic sense of context was lost.

To rectify this problem, a form of cross-case analysis was also conducted. First we read the field notes over and over until they had almost memorized them. Then, based on the sense of global context gained, the classes were categorized into a three-part typology based on classroom interaction. Group one included highly individualized classes where learners tended to work on their own on teacher-selected materials. Group two represented classes where there was a mix of individualized and small group work. In group three there was considerable teacher-student and student-student interaction and the social distance between the teacher and students was minimal. When both the NUDIST and cross case analyses were complete, the results of both were synthesized.

Findings

Space limitations preclude a detailed account of findings, a problem that will be rectified to some extent in the presentation. Consequently, we have chosen to portray the overriding theme that emerged from the study. This theme we call classroom culture. Following Tylor (as quoted in Bodley, 1994), classroom culture is defined as the socially patterned human thought and behavior that takes place in adult literacy education classrooms. It includes:

1. shared meanings about: teacher/learner roles, symbols and classroom activities. The extent to which meanings are shared varied between classes and among subgroups within classes.
2. norms regarding acceptable teacher and learner behavior. Norms were viewed from the perspective of what they were, how they were established, and how they were applied (positive and sanctioning).
3. relationships of power and authority (i.e. who gets who to do what and how).
5. A material culture defined by such things as classroom organization and materials used.

Classroom culture is holistic; all its components are inter-related. Classroom culture is shaped by external forces such as teachers' perspectives and characteristics, program configuration and students' perceptions and characteristics. Just as classroom culture is shaped by external forces, it in turn shapes what is taught, what is learned and how. Classroom culture is dynamic and constantly changing.

Authority and control. Classroom culture is greatly influenced by the teacher. In virtually all the classes we studied the teacher selected the content and guided the process of formal instruction. In some cases learners were given limited choice, such as in the selection of one activity over another, but these choices were almost universally at teachers' discretion. To be sure teachers tried to make content relevant to learners. Yet while relevance was something that concerned almost all teachers, decisions of relevance were by an large based on teachers' perceptions of what was relevant. In one class where most students were foreign born, the teacher selected immigration as the class theme and reading and writing activities revolved around this theme. In another multi-ethnic class ,the teacher directed learners to write about major cultural celebrations in their countries of origin. Many teachers used commercially prepared materials which were chosen at least partially for their perceived relevance. In several GED prep classes, teachers developed lessons that focused on GED test content. Teachers also controlled time and space. They determined when class would begin and end, furniture arrangements, and how long classroom activities would last.

Learners almost universally accepted the preeminence of the teachers' role as being legitimate. When teachers directed an activity, there was nearly universal compliance, sometimes after some good natured grumbling over less popular activities. Sometimes learners "tuned out" for periods. Although it would have been tempting to consider this as evidence of passive resistance, most learners who tuned out actively re-engaged shortly after a tuning out episode.

We infer that the preeminence of the teacher's role is the product of deep-seated cultural norms regarding teacher's and students' roles. Learners expect teachers to guide instruction and teachers believe it is their responsibility to do so. These mutual expectations result in a teacher-predominate classroom culture. An exception was a class taught by a teacher with a Freirian perspective. In this class, the social distance between the teacher and students was less than in any other we observed and the teacher often engaged in discussions as an active participant rather than as a facilitator or guide. Yet when we interviewed the teacher, it became clear that the class functioned as it did by her design rather than through her acquiescence to the learners. In one of this teacher's classes we observed there had been several heated thematic discussions. As another dialogic discussion was about to take place, learners asked the teacher to curtail the dialogic process, suggesting that they wished the teacher to function in the more traditional teacher-directed role.

Classroom Norms. Norms regarding learner behavior differed substantially from what one might expect in an elementary or secondary education classroom. In most classes there were learners who arrived up to 45 minutes late. They were rarely sanctioned negatively and usually fit into class with minimal acknowledgement or class disruption. In many classes there were students who tuned out for periods by leaving class for self-determined breaks, by staring out into space, by putting their heads down on the desk or table, by engaging in personal conversations not related to class and even by sleeping. This behavior was seldom sanctioned negatively by the teacher or other students. As mentioned earlier, after a tune out episode, learners usually re-engaged. Teachers tended to attribute tuning out to learner fatigue, although observers comments suggested that boredom was sometimes a factor. Learners usually chose where they would sit and cliques based on age, gender or ethnicity were evident in most seating selections.

The most common pattern of teachers' instructional behavior was an activity followed by questioning and answering. The teacher, for example, would ask learners to read and would then ask questions to determine if they had comprehended. Similar patterns were common for writing, math and GED subjects. Except when learners were directed to work in small groups or pairs, dialog between the teacher and individual students predominated. The teacher would ask a question, an individual student would respond--either voluntarily or by being called upon--and a new question would be posed. Typically questions were designed to elicit a factual response rather than students' opinions. Rarely did a question and answer episode open into to a collective discussion where students interacted with each other as well as with the teacher.

Norms regarding helping and correcting varied among classes. In an extreme case, a class that was highly individualized, the teacher believed that only she should correct and help. She moved from student to student, usually in the order that students arrived, correcting their individualized work and delivering a mini-lesson based on their errors. Each of these sessions lasted about 20 minutes, and learners who had completed their work had to wait for the teacher's attention before they were permitted to move on. In the majority of classes learners corrected and helped each other. In many cases teachers directed learners to work in pairs or small groups where they corrected each others' work and helped each other. This was most common in math, in which case learners worked on math problems together, and in writing where learners edited each others work. In some classes students helping students was very common and natural. A student would write a sentence on the board, for example, and another student would correct it before the teacher had the opportunity or a learner would ask another learner for help on a math problem because the teacher was busy elsewhere.

In nearly every case, teachers indicated that they were striving to create a nurturing, trusting classroom atmosphere and this was evident in observation. Teachers verbally rewarded learners when they were correct and virtually never took a punishing stance when learners made mistakes. Teachers attempted to reduce the social distance between themselves and learners through humor and by brief personal accounts of their likes and dislikes and personal out-of-class activities. In classrooms that were used exclusively for adult education, there was typically a bulletin board with student work displayed and other adult symbols. In such classrooms, students usually sat at tables or u-shaped arrangements rather than in rows.

Shaping factors. Just as classroom culture shapes what and how learners learn, classroom culture is in turn is shaped by factors external to the classroom. The most powerful shaping factor is program configuration, defined as how the program is organized in respect to such factors and the number of hours per week classes meet, open or closed enrollment, and mixed or homogeneous learner skill levels. Hours of instruction per week varied from six to over 30. In some cases learners who were essentially illiterate were assigned to the same class as learners who were ready to pass the GED, while in others learners were at approximately at the same skill level. In open enrollment classes, students could enroll at any time and there was a constant flow of new learners, while in closed enrollment classes learners entered as a cohort and remained a cohort.

Together, these three components of program configuration influenced the ability of the class to function as an effective social system. When classes met only several hours a week, it was more difficult for shared meanings to develop regarding the purpose of activities and for rapport to develop between teachers and students and among students. More importantly, when the same learners were not present each week due to attrition and open-enrollment, learners were less able to learn classroom routine and the meanings associated with classroom exercises and social interactions. Comparing stable classes that met 20 or more hours a week or more and had stable enrollments to less stable classes, in stable classes teachers seemed to attempt activities that were more complex and to conduct them more successfully. Learners were adept at helping each other and there was a smoother transition from activity to activity. More importantly, much more was accomplished in a given hour of instruction.

Mixed enrollment caused problems for teachers, especially if the range in skill level were substantial. Faced with this situation, teachers had three choices. They could teach to the entire class, in which case the activities were either too difficult or too easy for some learners. Some tuning out behavior was due to the boredom and/or frustration this sometimes caused for learners. Alternatively, they could use highly individualized instruction in which learners worked on their own with materials selected at their skill level. These materials were usually kept in portfolios of folders. Although learners worked at an appropriate skill level in such classes, there was minimal social interaction among learners and few thematic discussions. Finally, teachers could group learners according to level, have them work individually or collaboratively on activities, and rotate from group to group to help and correct. This alternative was only possible when there a sufficient number of learners to establish groups and it presented difficult classroom arrangement problems for teachers. Some teachers adopted an eclectic approach in which learners worked individually part of the time but were taught as a group when the material warranted.

Major changes in enrollment, student flow, and skill levels reeked havoc in two of the 20 sites. One class was a family literacy class originally comprised of welfare mothers whose children were in the early childhood component. Welfare reform had decimated the population of welfare learners, and to maintain class numbers, community members were invited to enroll. Previously, the commonality associated with gender and parenthood, and well as participation in child-parent activities, had caused the class to bond, but when the commonality disappeared, the class ceased to function well as a social system and the teacher never adapted. In a GED preparation class, a small class of learners who paid a fee to enroll was changed the next semester to a large open-enrollment, mixed level class into which the small class was merged. Although the teacher was reluctant to short-change her the original group of learners by starting at the beginning, she was faced with many new students with low skills. At the time of the second observation, the teacher used the same activities that had previously worked successfully with the small class, but these activities were now either too difficult or misunderstood by many new learners. The teacher, who sensed this from new learners' non-responses to her questioning and answering, became exasperated and responded with sarcasm directed towards learners.

Student characteristics such as age, ethnicity and gender were another shaping factor. In regard to age, in two classes there were a number of teenage dropouts who disrupted the class with joking behavior and loud personal conversations. In two classes of mixed racial composition there were mild inter-racial confrontations. In another class of primarily foreign-born, activities failed because the learners did not understand the teacher's directions. On the positive side, in a class of female welfare recipients, learners were able to discuss gender issues a personal level, something that probably would have been impossible had men been present, and a class of mixed ethnicity used immigration as a unifying theme for reading and writing.

Conclusions and implications. When learners and teachers share meanings regarding classroom activities and the goals of instruction, and when classes are stable in respect to enrollment so that these shared meanings can develop, adult literacy education classes function as an effective social system directed toward learning. This finding suggests that policy makers should consider classroom stability to be a major factor contributing to instructional success.

Open enrollment, classes that meet but several hours a week and mixed enrollments are practices that should be discouraged.

Although teachers strive to create a trustful, non-threatening learning environment, and to make the content of instruction relevant to learners, they control the process and content of instruction. The centrality of the teacher suggests that teacher competence is critical for instructional success. Accordingly, staff development should be expanded in both quantity and quality and access to it should be improved.

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"You are activated, proud of it": A Study of Learner Identified Impacts of Participation in Adult Literacy Programs

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Abstract: This study is based on life history interviews with ten adult literacy students. It examines how adults describe the impacts of their participation in adult literacy classes on their lives, and how the impacts they define compare with performance measures in the new Workforce Investment Act.

Introduction

How do students in adult literacy programs describe the impacts of participation on their lives? Our study examines through life history narratives the ways participants talk about the impacts of their experiences. In this paper we describe the impacts they identified and begin to discuss the implications of these finding in light of the newly enacted Workforce Investment Act.

The purposes of adult literacy services as defined in the Workforce Investment Act (1998) are to

> (1) assist adults to become literate and obtain the knowledge and skills necessary for employment and self-sufficiency; (2) assist adults who are parents to obtain the educational skills necessary to become full partners in the educational development of their children; and (3) assist adults in the completion of a secondary degree. (Sec. 202)

Performance is defined in terms of "skills levels" and "unsubsidized employment." We believe that we can gain a more complex and nuanced understanding of the impact of participation in adult education by listening to the ways learners talk about literacy practices in their own lives.

We understand literacy as practices enmeshed in people's lives and use this theoretical approach in this study. The concept of literacy as social practices tied to context has come from work by psychologists like Scribner and Cole (1981), anthropologists including Heath (1983) and Street (1995), and linguists Barton and Hamilton (1998). Instead of viewing literacy as a skill that can be measured by level, these scholars see literacies as practices used in a context for a purpose.

This study follows an earlier quantitative longitudinal study of adult literacy participants in Tennessee (Merrifield, Smith, Rea, Shriver, 1993; Merrifield, Smith, Rea, Crosse, 1994). From 1991 to 1995, 450 people in three cohorts were interviewed when they enrolled in adult literacy programs. All had reading scores on the Adult Basic Learning Exam (ABLE) test below 6.0. Annual follow-up interviews were conducted with 194 participants from the three cohorts after one year, with 84 after two years, and with 35 people after three years.

The current qualitative study complements the statistical findings of the longitudinal study. Life history narratives are rich sources of individual meanings and help illustrate the system level constraints influencing people's lives (Bloom & Munro, 1995). We conducted two semi-structured life history interviews with the participants, usually in their homes. We were interested in what happened in participants' work, family, and social lives before, during, and after participation in literacy programs.

The ten participants were identified from the 139 longitudinal study subjects who had a follow-up interview in 1995. Each had at least 80 hours of adult literacy instruction. We selected a sample of six women and four men, six European Americans and four African Americans based on the demographics of students in Tennessee Adult Basic Education programs. Both urban and rural programs and each of the three regions of the state were represented. One of the participants had graduated from high school and two have eventually passed the GED test. The urban participants included Bert, an African American man, age 28; Elizabeth, an African American woman, age 65; Laura, an African American woman, age 47; and June, a European American woman, age 32. Participants from small towns or rural communities included Suzanne, a European American woman, age 32; Marvin, an African American man, age 53; Harry, a European American man, age 74; Ruth, a European American woman, age 45; Kris, a European American woman, age 30; and Will, a European American man, age 53. (All names have been changed).

We analyzed the transcripts of these interviews using an iterative inductive approach. Multiple readings and coding, both manual and using NUD*IST qualitative research software enabled us to arrive at findings that are discussed below.

Findings

From the interviews we have identified three broad categories that structure the narratives of the participants: their everyday life experiences and relationships; their work, paid and unpaid; and their experiences in adult education programs. Cutting across these categories are several themes including the impacts of their adult education experiences on their lives, structural barriers to early education, and the value of education as perceived by participants.

Everyday life. The everyday life experiences described by participants were a mix of hard times and ordinary life issues. Of the ten participants, six grew up in rural areas, working on farms even as children. They were usually from big families with an average of five children. Four of the older participants left school to go to work to help support their families. The schooling of the three older African Americans was in the segregated south. As Elizabeth told us, "back then, if you was able to pick cotton and chop, when summertime come, whenever cotton chopping time come, school would shut down and we would have to go to the field." Ruth, Suzanne, and Kris left school because they felt that they weren't learning, weren't being taught. June was pregnant is the tenth grade and stopped school, and Bert had problems with other students and left school.

The discourse about adult literacy students that is often heard in the field, as summarized by Quigley (1997), describes them as "being incapable of helping themselves," as people who can be "'saved' by enrolling in a literacy course" (pp. 35-36). This description is not born out by our data. Instead, people describe lives that are in most ways quite ordinary. They have had jobs, raised children, go shopping, have hobbies, are concerned about their neighbors and communities. Their literacy skills and/or educational opportunities have been limited, but they are not people who are "other" than most Tennesseans.

No one lives in a luxurious house, but Harry, Will, and Marvin all live in comfortable homes that they own. The others live in rented houses or apartments, subsidized for Kris, Laura, and Elizabeth. Both Elizabeth and Laura have complaints about the heat or maintenance of their apartments. We did not hear this from Kris or the others. Ruth would like to be able to afford a house instead of a trailer. Of the ten, only two had moved recently. The rest have lived in the same neighborhood and often the same house for over ten years, 22 in Harry's case.

Everyone except Harry and Laura lives with family members. June, Kris, and Suzanne have small children at home. A granddaughter lives with Elizabeth. Will, Marvin, and Ruth live with their spouses and have grown children nearby. Bert lives with his mother. All except Elizabeth drive and have access to a car, though not always one in running order.

The neighborhoods where people live vary considerably from rural communities to inner city Memphis. Three women, June, Laura, and Elizabeth live in urban neighborhoods they describe as "tense," dangerous, particularly at night. Their everyday lives are constrained by fear. "You all ain't got no business over here at nighttime" (Elizabeth); "Now that's pretty bad when you can't let your kids out to play" (June); "All I know is that there are drug sellers in the neighborhood next door, and people, they come and get what ever and go on" (Laura). Some might think Ruth, Bert and Harry live in "bad" neighborhoods (a trailer park, an older Memphis neighborhood, across the tracks in a small a town), but they don't think so. They describe their neighborhoods: "It's fine. The neighbors are friendly and close to the store" (Bert); "I feel like I am in the country, but still in the city. And so anyway, I just like it here myself" (Harry). And even Elizabeth says she's never had any problems.

No one in this group reported income above the Tennessee median ($26,990 in 1993), but only Laura, Kris, and Suzanne spoke of financial problems. Laura depends on subsidized housing and support from her daughter and ex-husband. Kris receives disability and child support, but is in debt: "I've got my rent, my lights. I've got my beds, all of us got beds, I've got that payment. I've got my car payment. I've got a loan from two years ago I still got to pay off." Suzanne and her husband struggle to support her three daughters and his three children.

For the rest, there is either sufficient income or an ability to adjust to what income is available. Elizabeth, Harry, and June all talked about living within their means. Elizabeth: "I'm doing fine. Don't take too much for me. I just make my [Social Security] check do, what I get..... You can live off just what God blessed you with, you'll be able to make it." June, who recently opened her first checking account, resisted the bank's offers of credit:

> I know if I want something in the store and I got my checkbook, well I don't have the money in the bank, I am not going to write that check... I said I didn't want no ATM card, I just want a basic check account, and that's it. If I had an ATM card I'd bounce, overbounce like crazy. So I told them they could keep that, and I'd just stick with my checks.

Though for the most part this group is and have been self-supporting and have raised families, they say that their lives have been "hard." The younger ones' financial problems are compounded by costs born disproportionally by the poor -- higher rent-to-own prices because they have no credit, paying money order fees when they don't have a checking account, being unable to pay the "up front" lawyer's fees that might enable them to address financial wrongs. These lives may be ordinary, but are not easy.

Family activities and work fill much of the everyday lives of the participants in this study. But all had other activities as well. Will, Laura, and Elizabeth are active in their church, singing in the choir or attending Bible study as well as Sunday services. Bert, Marvin, and Harry attend church as well. The other activities people mentioned doing in their free time include: shopping, visiting family, walking, exercise, fishing, swimming; on-line chat groups; watching/following sports; going out with friends or family to the zoo, a casino, clubs, parks, movies, concerts. Their hobbies included woodcraft, collecting unicorns, crochet, playing music, working on cars. Most of them also read the Bible, newspapers, romances, and magazines.

Work. Much of what people talked to us about centered on their work lives. All of them had worked at least two jobs; five had worked many (12- 29) years at one job. Three are now retired; the rest are either working (4) or hoping to work (3). The three who are hoping to work all have health problems that limit what they are able to do. For the three older men, work has been a source of pride and satisfaction. Harry talked about being a good worker and being called back three times after he retired to help train others. Marvin was able to learn "hands on" to be a mechanic and over-the-road truck driver for a local tractor firm: "Every morning I got up, I wanted to work." He left the job when his health made it impossible to continue to drive trucks and his lack of education meant he could not work as a supervisor.

For the women work has been more a necessity than a pleasure. They can imagine and hope for work that pays well and that they enjoy, but have jobs washing dishes, housekeeping or processing chickens. Ruth told of being so cold from her job at a chicken plant that she is unable to go out again to class in the winter. Laura described cleaning in dorms after a weekend parties and working in jobs where her paycheck "wasn't right." Suzanne is an the exception among the women, having had a variety of factory jobs that she has enjoyed. And Kris liked being the assistant manager at a pizza restaurant but was forced to quit due to health problems.

Only Marvin and Laura spoke of being limited by lack of literacy skills in their employment, Marvin because he could not become a supervisor and Laura due to her difficulties spelling. In general, people are able to do their jobs, reading and writing the texts they encounter, or in Marvin's case finding ways to work around it. Will described using blueprints and keeping his own notebook of specifications in his job building customized bus interiors. Marvin learned to read a map and match the road signs to the names on the map. Ruth and Elizabeth said they had no reading or writing in their jobs.

But lack of credentials, lack of a high school or GED diploma, has been a barrier to jobs for Ruth and Will and a barrier to additional training for Kris and Bert. Harry and Marvin doubt they could get the jobs they had if they were entering the job market today. Elizabeth urged her daughters to finish school so they wouldn't have to work as hard as she had, "doing everything" in a neighborhood restaurant. This group believes that regardless of the skills needed for a job - and some talked about increasing skill levels - educational credentials are necessary to get good jobs. Speaking of education, Elizabeth told us: "It's better to have it and don't need it than need it and don't have it. And more than likely you're gonna need it."

Literacy practices. All of the participants in this study enrolled in what Tennessee calls Level 1 or literacy classes. In these classes they reported learning a variety of skills such as breaking words into syllables, using standard writing conventions, and working with math. All but two talked about ways these improved skills led to new or expanded literacy practices in their lives.

Changes in literacy practices included six people who reported more reading of newspapers, the Bible, other books, and to their children. Seven reported new literacy practices in their everyday lives including opening a checking account, programing a remote control, using a map in a search for a new apartment, using measurement at work, being better able to fill out job reports. Several people described new understanding and awareness of history and national and world events. While in no instance were these reported as life-changing outcomes, people did talk about these changed skills and practices and new knowledge as improvements in their lives. The impacts were significant, particularly for those who were the most limited readers. "Life's brighter when you learn how to read," says Marvin.

Sense of self. While they reported some changes in literacy practices, this group also talked about changes in their sense of themselves. These changes included pride in their accomplishments. Harry spoke about passing the GED test: "It built my ego, and I've had a lot of praises and [they] even made a write-up with me in the paper." For some, like Elizabeth, there was a new sense of efficacy: "I feel better about myself since I learned how to read better. I feel like I'm somebody. You feel better about yourself when you learn how to do a lot of things for yourself, you know." Social situations were made easier for Marvin: "I've got a lot of friends right now that we sit down and we talk, and hey, I done looked in the paper and see the same thing that he sees, so we an discuss this matter." Ruth said she learned to speak her opinion, for instance when her supervisor changed her scheduled Christmas week off : "So I spoke up. I said, 'No, it isn't right. I want my vacation.' And I got it." It appears to us that most of these people had a positive sense of self before participating in adult literacy programs. But their participation did lead to changes in what they felt able to do, or as June put it, to feeling "activated."

Conclusions

This study contributes adult learners' perspectives to a national conversation on outcomes that tends to define literacy performances and outcomes in quite limited ways. For example, the new legislation defines "core indicators of performance" for adult literacy programs as improvements in literary skill levels, postsecondary education or training, unsubsidized employment or career advancement, and receipt of a secondary school diploma or equivalent (Workforce Investment Act, 1998, Sec. 212). Federal and state agencies will evaluate the effectiveness of adult literacy programs using these indicators, indicators that describe literacy as a collection of skills and that narrowly frame outcomes in terms of formal education and credentials and economic impact.

The narratives of the ten people in our study suggest that the impacts of participation in adult education programs are complex and varied, as are the people who participate. But that these changes will lead to postsecondary education, secondary school diplomas, or career advancement for those who begin adult basic education at the literacy level is not evident in our study. People did change and recognized and named changes. For a variety of reasons these changes have not yet led to employment and in only two cases to the receipt of a GED certificate.

The second goal in the new legislation for literacy programs is for adults to have the skills needed for the educational development of their children. Three participants in this study did report increased reading to their children as an outcome of their participation in adult education. However, these parents came to adult literacy classes valuing education and all the parents reported being involved in their children's education, apparently with some success. Among the seven families with children of high school age or older (a total of 20), only one child had dropped out of school and nine had attended at least some college.

In her recent paper on performance accountability in adult education, Merrifield (1998) suggests the need for connecting performance goals with real life outcomes. The new legislation allows states to identify additional performance indicators beyond the core indicators noted above. Our research suggests the need for additional indicators that recognize a wide variety of changes in the lives and experiences of adult learners. These indicators should include expanded literacy practices, a stronger voice, and the excitement of learning and sharing new knowledge. As Marvin told us, "Things come natural to me now. I've come a long way."

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Superstition as an Impediment to the Education of Commercial Fishermen: A Psychocultural Investigation Using Video

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Abstract: Commercial fishermen are prone to be superstitious and engage in rituals of avoidance designed to resolve anxiety and "diminish" danger. Video interviews with British Columbia fishermen illuminate this problem. The author pleads for a broadening of techno-rational approaches to prevention-education. Psycho-cultural, as well as techno-rational factors (equipment etc) should be considered.

Getting Killed at Sea

The *Good Companion* is a British Columbia commercial fishing vessel fictionalized in Skogan's and McCallum's story of the same name. She was a sturdy boat and the captain took no chances. "He made sure that the crew's coffee cups, which hung in a row above the sink, faced inboard so not to pour luck over the side. He allowed no cans to be opened upside down for fear of overturning the boat. No whistling that would call up a wind. No black suitcases to bring a doctor or death on board. No fishing trips began on Friday, the unluckiest day of the week. No sly, water-shy cats. No women: women belonged to home and land" (1997, p. 3). As demonstrated by Skogan (1992) in her *Voyages With Strangers*, these kinds of "denial rituals" are practised by fishermen all over the world.

In North America commercial fishing is a dangerous occupation. Despite the collapse of the cod fishery on the east and the salmon fishery on the west coast, men and women on commercial fishing vessels continue to die at an alarming rate. For example, in Canada, an average of 342 vessels come to grief each year. In some cases - such as *Scotia Cape* or *Pacific Charmer* - this results in the loss of several lives at once. In other situations fishermen and women suffer the trauma of lacerations and burns as well as limbs pulled through machinery and bones crushed by flailing lines or blocks. In gillnetting, seining or dragging there is always the possibility of being dragged overboard by wire ropes, lines and nets. Standing in the bight of a seine net is a particular hazard. Falling overboard is exceedingly serious. Sometimes large vessels simply disappear. Having a fisherman for a father can be painful for kids.

These days more women are working in commercial fisheries. But it is still overwhelmingly a "man's world" and one of the most formidable challenges faced by prevention educators is the problem of convincing men fishing is dangerous. There is also a need to break out of reliance on techno-rational discourse - the notion that "prevention" is mostly a matter of ensuring equipment (lights, winches, liferafts, machinery) is in good working order (Boshier, 1997). However, researchers and educators stand on slippery decks. There is a need to break out of an almost exclusive reliance on techno-rational discourse and bring the fishermen's own perspectives and experiences to the foreground. But the educator would need to carefully consider the merits or demerits of appearing to endorse the notion safety is ensured by observing superstitions and denial rituals. This is both a theoretical and practical problem. How does one embrace subjective meanings without descending into unchallenged solipsism?

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Lucky Red Socks

When it appeared New Zealander Peter Blake and his crew were about to wrest the oldest sporting trophy in history (the America's Cup) from "Big-Bad" Dennis Conner and his American crew, luck was enthusiastically invoked. Team captain Blake would win races wearing red socks. Without the socks he lost. The implications were obvious and, although the regatta was being staged in San Diego, New Zealanders strutted around in red socks. Corporate sponsors made jaunty commercials with various illuminaries sporting their red socks. The Prime Minister and Governor-General - both wearing red socks - appeared on television to applaud Team New Zealand. After the victory a large and jubilant crowd turned out to welcome the sailors home - most sporting red socks. During the parade up Auckland's main street the crew was showered with balloons released from red socks suspended above. Now, four years later - with the first New Zealand defence imminent - the official *Team New Zealand* website [http://www.teamnz.org/nz] mentions red socks more than it discusses masts, rigging and sails.

Theoretical Perspective

This is part of a larger study broadly informed by a psychoanalytic framework wherein superstitions or rituals of avoidance are seen as adaptive mechanisms designed to resolve uncertainty. The classic study in this area was Malinowski's (1925 - reprinted 1948) analysis of Trobiand Island fishermen who combined magic with "scientific " knowledge - both deployed to enhance food-gathering activities. Malinowski lived with the islanders he observed and felt that when events couldn't be explained "scientifically" magic or ritual was deployed to reduce uncertainty. Support for this notion was found in what he felt were the different orientations of the inshore (in the lagoon) as compared to the more dangerous offshore fisheries. Offshore fishermen performed more elaborate rituals and were more deeply superstitious than those who worked in the calmer waters of the lagoon. Wherever the outcome was more uncertain, the greater the need for magic. Hence "we do not find magic wherever the pursuit is certain, reliable and well under the control of rational methods and technological processes. Further, we find magic where the element of danger is conspicuous" (1948, p. 139-140). Other informative studies are by Mullen (1978) and Orbach (1977).

Malinowski's was a functionalist analysis wherein superstition served to reduce anxiety where there is uncertainty and a risky situation (both continuously present on a commercial fishing vessel). Thomas (1971) disputed the notion magic appears when science and technology reach their limits. After the author of this paper discussed this with fishermen on boats bristling with fish finders, radios, EPIRB, radars and other electronic gizzmos designed to reduce uncertainty, our view is that it makes no difference. Start whistling in the wheelhouse of a three million dollar seine boat and the skipper will be as furious as his great, great, great grandfather who was a smacksman or drifterman fishing out of Hull, Finland or Croatia a few centuries ago (Lummis, 1983). Same with the black suitcase, label upside down and other forbidden behaviours. Technology has not eroded their "power" and importance.

A relevant theoretical insight is Freud's work on defense mechanisms of the ego. Ego stability can be ensured through *projection* wherein responsibility for accidents is attributed to "outside" factors. Projection and rationalization, both ego defence mechanisms, are part of a process of denial which "diminish" danger. Trouble is, as Junger noted in *The Perfect Storm*, "once you're in the denial business ... it's hard to know when to stop. Captains routinely overload their boats, ignore storm warnings, stow their liferafts in the wheelhouse, and disarm their emergency radio beacons" (1997, p. 95).

Many fishermen claim fishing is not hazardous. Besides, nothing can be done about it because "when your number's up, your number's up." If accidents are due to fate or the Gods, why bother with prevention education programs? Fatalism, superstition and rituals of avoidance - such as not leaving port of Friday - provide little incentive for prevention. Death, injury and property loss are widely regarded as "the price to be paid." These things "just happen." It's all a matter of luck.

Roughly speaking, fish, money and luck are interchangeable. Hence, Zulaika (1981) who spent a summer aboard a Spanish pair-trawler off the Canadian Grand Banks, noted the pervasive, almost obsessive preoccupation with luck that "at the time of fishing ... is ... the medium through which the other two orders (fish and money) are made possible" (p. 67). Hence, when one of the pair trawlers was badly damaged in a storm and nearly sank "it would have been rather ludicrous for the fishermen to blame anybody for what happened, for bad luck was behind it all" (p. 72). Similarly, at the inquest into the death of two Canadians after the 1997 capsize of *Pacific Charmer*, fishermen giving evidence were reluctant to attribute responsibility to the corporate owners of the vessel. Most noticeably, *The Fishermen* (the local fishing union newspaper) announced that the survivors were "mystified" by what caused the tragedy (Survivors Mystified By Sudden Sinking of the Pacific Charmer, *The Fishermen,* December 22, 1997). On the Spanish pair trawlers the problem is that "luck is the key concept around which all the fishermen's expectations are centred and only belief in its "arbitrariness" supplies the daily energy to keep fishing (Zulaika, 1981).

Poggie, Pollnac and associates at the University of Rhode Island have made a sustained study of fishing superstitions and taboos and claim that requesting protection from saints or practicing rituals of avoidance serves important functions. Supernatural behavior tends to reduce anxiety associated with risk. It provides comfort and diminishes the subjective perceptions of risk associated with fishing and is part of a larger tapestry of adapting to anxiety-provoking "lifeworld" and "technical" aspects of fishing (Knutson, 1991). The trouble is, denying or trivializing danger does not make fishermen good candidates for adult education. Rituals of avoidance relieve them of the need to become informed. Here is a case of where the "broad experiential base" of the adult learner does not necessarily enhance his responsiveness to education. Is this a case for the kind of "unfreezing" envisaged by Malcolm Knowles?

Purpose

This project builds on Poggie's east coast studies which suggested those in the most dangerous (usually offshore) fisheries tended to manifest a higher level of superstition than those in the least dangerous (usually inshore) fisheries. The purpose of the present study was to examine this phenomenon on the west coast of Canada - and, as a result, inform prevention-education.

Although superstition and belief in paranormal phenomena is widespread (and probably increasing, despite the availability of higher education) it is still regarded as a bit silly and people have a hard time "confessing" to it. This, coupled with high levels of illiteracy in parts of the westcoast fishing fleet, caused us to abandon questionnaires in favour of interviews conducted on video. Fishermen are great talkers and, we discovered, are not fazed by a camera.

Along the lines suggested by Malinowski (1925), Poggie and Gersuny (1972), Pollnac, Poggie and Van Dusen (1995) it was hypothesized that fishermen in the most dangerous (offshore) fisheries would manifest higher levels of superstition and report engaging in more rituals of avoidance than those in the "safer" inshore fisheries. If so, this would point to a need to tailor prevention-education programs accordingly.

Method

The author is in the midst of three-year investigation of fishing accidents, part of which involves making a one-hour video documentary designed to broaden discourses used to understand and prevent accidents. During the 1998 summer fishing season the camera was kept aboard the author's 26' high speed salvage boat which is used to respond to fires, capsizes, groundings and other marine emergencies. As part of the broader project, fishermen were interviewed on camera[2] about their superstitions and rituals of avoidance. Questions pertaining to this were usually asked in the latter part of a broader interview. No advance warning was given. The first question in this part of the interview was usually "Would you leave port on a Friday?" If the answer was "yes" (indicating an absence of superstition) there would be questions about other rituals (e.g. black bags, women on boats, labels upside down). If "no" (indicating high superstition) there would be probes about the function of this and other rituals.

Interviews were conducted on a variety of westcoast gillnetters, trollers, draggers, seiners, dive and other boats. These men were variously fishing for salmon (the most frequent), halibut, tuna, rockfish, prawns and scallops. Some of the interviewees were retired fishermen. At the end of the summer the author viewed all the unedited footage and proceeded as follows. Approximately six hours of digital camera tape was dubbed into VHS format. Next, all the interviews were screened and responses to questions about the best known superstitions (e.g. leaving port on a Friday) coded - along with detail about the interviewee's type of vessel and fishery.

Findings

When viewing the tapes it was apparent it would be difficult to label interviewees as primarily involved in either the inshore of offshore fishery. With the new quota and "stacked" licensing system in B.C., some fishermen now do both. Hence, one of our younger interviews claimed to fish salmon (inshore) in the summer, halibut (offshore) in the winter and quite few other things in between. Hence, we were not able to confidently compare the nature and magnitude of the superstitions manifested by inshore and offshore fishers. Hence, findings derived from this study are concerned with more general observations about superstition and how it pertains to prevention education.

- All the interviewees had "heard about" the most common superstitions. Most interviewees chuckled when the subject was raised and looked a bit embarrassed. But all were familiar with the most popular superstitions.
- About one third of respondents said they believed in the main superstitions and engaged in defensive rituals (like not leaving port on a Friday, forbidding black suitcases aboard, not whistling in the wheelhouse). Although several interviewees claimed it was the "old" fishermen that were superstitious, we were not convinced. Several of our younger interviewees endorsed rituals of avoidance while older interviewees repudiated them.

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[2] **Thanks to Camera Operator Dave Harre (of Harre Productions and Old Technologies Ltd in Aotearoa) who endured rough seas, toxic smoke, belligerent salvors and being hauled out of bed at all hours to speed off to distress incidents. But, most of all, thanks to Dave for not dropping our expensive camera in the water and shielding it from salt spray and other dangers.**

- Most boys learn how to fish from their father or other close relative. In the father-son combinations interviewed both engaged in identical rituals of avoidance. A video example shown at AERC involved the skipper of the seiner *Viking Spirit* and his deckhand son - both superstitious and believing that "when you're number's up, you're number's up!"
- Not everyone on a vessel necessarily share the same superstitions although, as a survivors of the *Pacific Charmer* capsize told us, those claiming not to be superstitious will avoid engaging in "offensive" behaviour (such as opening a can upside down) as a "courtesy" to other crew members.

Several of those claiming not to be superstitious indicated they nevertheless "avoided any risk" by observing the rituals of avoidance. As one respondent said "It's no trouble to open a can the right-way up so why tempt fate by opening it upside down?"

Implications For Adult Education

Defense mechanisms, denial and rituals of avoidance should be incorporated into curriculum aimed at commercial fishermen. But there are problems for the educator or researcher.

Manifesting Epistemological Pluralism: In this work our mission is to broaden discourses around fishing accidents and their prevention. But moving away from the dominant techno-rational discourse and embracing a subjectivist position, tends to legitimize superstition rituals Should the responsible educator pour scorn on the "validity" and utility of superstitious ritual, demonstrate its functionality and put it on the table for critical review, or endorse it as legitimate adaptive behaviour? There is no clear answer but, in the meantime, prevention educators at marine colleges, WCB and Coastguard ought to at least acknowledge superstitions and rituals of avoidance are a significant corollary of commercial fishing. Even putting it on the curriculum would create space for discussion and ameliorate embarrassment that currently surrounds this subject.

First Nations Beliefs: Some of our First Nations (i.e. Native-Canadian) informants told us that where a father dies in a fishing accident it is certain the son will do likewise. Hence, there is little point in wearing flotation equipment or engaging in prevention activities. To what extent can the critically-oriented educator who has misgivings about the prevalence of techno-rational discourse legitimise or reinforce such dismal and fatalistic discourses about First Nations fishing? What is the culturally respectful response here? Confront fatalism head on? Work with but try to change it? The least respectful response is to ignore it.

Familial Factors: Familial influences - particularly that of the father on the son - merit considerable attention. Even though the son has access to radar and other modern aids that the father didn't enjoy - he endorses the same rituals of avoidance. As such, he has the same hesitancy about education as his father. Finally, to what extent does this phenomenon show up in other dangerous occupations - like mining, logging, steel working - and settings where fatalism impedes the impact of safety messages and efforts of adult educators?

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Adult Education Adrift in a Net: Making Waves or Clutching a Lifering?

Roger Boshier [Convenor]
Mary Wilson, Byron Burnham and Patricia Reeves

Abstract: The Internet and World Wide Web exemplify values advanced by heroic adult education theorists such as Ivan Illich. They have also triggered a deluge of hyperbole and surfeit of false dichotomies (e.g. online *versus* face-to-face education). But, in the chorus of critics and advocates, adult educators have been noticeably silent. This symposium is designed to rectify this situation by interrogating Internet and Web learning and education from an "adult education" perspective.

Notice to Shipping: Complex Web Directly Ahead

Roger Boshier[1]

When a vessel runs into a fishnet it comes to an immediate halt and, if near shore, can drift helplessly into rocks or sand. In B.C. a salmon net is made of fine Web and, even with the stricken vessel hauled out of the water, it is a formidable task to get out of the tangle.

At the dawn of the 21st century, Adult Education is steaming along seemingly oblivious to nets laying directly ahead and also to port and starboard. On the bridge, critical theorists, postmoderns and functionalists are peering ahead but not keeping a "sharp lookout" as required by Rule 5 of the Collision Regulations. In many quarters it's as if the Internet (and its sexy offspring, the World Wide Web) is just another passing fad - like its predecessors, group discussion, great books and A-V devices. In short, there are few signs adult educators are significantly influencing discourses about education and learning on the World Wide Web. Is adult education adrift - being dragged along by the discourses of corporatism, "training" and "communications?"

To what extent does the Internet present adult educators with opportunities to enact their historic commitments to equity and social justice? With the enormous reach of the Web what will adult education look like twenty years from now? What is the relationship between adult education and "distributed learning?" Does anyone worry that the Web is largely an American creation with a spine that begins in Vancouver/Seattle, snakes through Palo Alto and ends in San Diego? Unlike teaching machines from yesteryear, the Internet is not a passing fad. Because of its scope and speed of deployment - and possible consequences for adult education - this is a good time to reinforce Rule 5.

Because the Internet changes daily and barely a week goes by without news of new corporate acquisitions, mergers or other "restructurings" of search engine, software and hardware companies, it is risky writing about the Web. Yet, as we lower the flag on the 20th, the most ardent advocates of the Internet seem to think the initials www are written across the bow of the 21st century. The Web is a corollary of the commodification of education in the context of "globalisation" (in some parts of the world, a code for "Americanisation"). Some of the discourses constructing Internet learning and education contain high levels of hyperbole while others are dismal and pessimistic. But, whatever the situation, the Web is seductive and, as Mao Tse Tung observed, "we live in interesting times." At present, at least four discourses are constructing Web learning and education (Boshier & Chia, 1999).

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- Advocates of *techno-utopianism* believe the Web leads to greater access to education, will result in "equity" and revive fading local democracies. This discourse is choked with corporate razzmatazz and is largely constructed around California chic - with unproblematized commitments to individual liberty and tendency to ignore awkward problems like racism, violence, environmental degradation and the fact folks living not far from Los Angeles don't have a telephone - let alone a high-speed computer and server.
- Advocates of *techno-cynicism* do not consider the Web a wired utopia. To what extent is it a centralizing technology - which extends the reach, and possibilities for surveillance, by already privileged elites? Another element of this discourse concerns American dominance of the Web (Wilson, Qayyum & Boshier, 1997) and its role in exploitative colonialism.
- Techno-zealotry is tiresome and continuously upbeat. The Web is a "rational-technical" instrument that knows no bounds and can be harnessed to educate rich and poor and, when necessary, run the coffee and Coca Cola machine. Techno-zealots take refuge in grand generalizations, deploy lofty metanarratives and pursue technology for its own sake.
- In the *techno-structuralism* discourse the key question is - who is doing what to whom and why? What matters is how the Web is deployed. Hence, the context in which the Web is deployed or the institutional forces within which it is nested, are at the centre of this discourse (Gayol & Schied, 1997). Whether it is good for adult learning and education, or has the potential to revitalise local democracy, depends less on the Web and more on who's using it and why.

AIDS educators in places like San Francisco have used principles of adult education with stunning success. Yet, for reasons difficult to understand, the AIDS epidemic - and the educational response it evoked - is barely visible in "mainstream" adult education. There have been a few papers at AERC and occasional articles in the *Adult Education Quarterly* or comparable journals elsewhere. But a few toots on a horn hardly constitute a coherent symphony of effort. Is it the same with the Web? Even out of a sense of self-interest, adult educators might heave themselves up the nearest vantage point to look at the Internet learning and education landscape.

Our purpose is to examine developments in Web learning and education from the perspective of adult education. Although adult education is imbued by postmodern ambiguities, core values still prevail. These concern (I) the need to manifest respect for the experience and background of learners (ii) the importance of authentic - not just superficial - forms of interaction and (iii) respect for learning in a broad array of settings. The symposium is organised as follows. After an initial analysis concerning the state of adult education and its core values the presenters will position themselves as adult educators and consider issues pertaining to the Web.

The Web in Higher Education: Steaming Ahead or Tangled Propellers

Byron Burnham[2]

When gillnetters or seiners chase elusive salmon, mariners who run into nets create tangles which evokes harsh words, bitter feelings and lawsuits. The same happens when universities embrace the Web (usually positioning it as an instrument to secure "access" and "equity"). With universities committed to distributed learning - the convergence of face-to-face and off-campus technologies, why bother with adult education? The Web has provided money-minded university administrators with a way of leap-frogging right over extension or adult education operations. Now there is nothing to "extend" because the university is everywhere and nowhere all at the same time. There isn't much space for adult education in the midst of this postmodern conundrum.

Faculty are recording lectures and placing them on the Web for student review. We can now place even annotated graphics on the Web to accompany lectures. The old sequence of audience, method, technique, and finally device selection has been turned on its head. Devices or technology are creating new ways of teaching. We are even meeting our students differently from the way we did in the past.

With that as a backdrop, here are *Guiding Principles for Distance Teaching and Learning* as espoused by ADEC (a large university consortium dedicated to distance learning) with responses framed from an adult education perspective).

ADEC Principles and ADED Responses

First Principle: "The learning experience must have a clear purpose with tightly focused outcomes and objectives. Web-based learning designs must consider the nature of content, specific context, desired learning outcomes and characteristics of the learner. Learner-centered strategies include modular, stand-alone units compatible with short bursts of learning. Learning modules may also be open, flexible and self-directing."

Response: Many adult educators would object to this principle. At times we may want to be purposely vague and open. There are situations when outcomes should be listed in the most general way. For example, transformative learning outcomes can be stated only in the broadest of terms.

Second Principle: "The learner is actively engaged. Active, hands-on, concrete experiences are highly effective. Learning by doing, analogy and assimilation are increasingly important pedagogical forms. Where possible, learning outcomes should relate to real-life experiences through simulation and application."

Response: This principle seems limited to few topics. For example, a philosophy course which deal with ideas may have a harder time providing for "hands-on" experiences than would a fly tying course.

Principle Three: "The learning environment makes appropriate use of a variety of media. Various learning styles are best engaged by using a variety of media to achieve learning outcomes. Selection of media may also depend on nature of content, learning goals, access to technology,

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and the local learning environment."
Response: The idea that learning styles are best accommodated with a variety of media seems congruent with principles of adult education. But we must examine media available in a Web world. At present there is little variation in Web environments. Selection of media is dependent upon local learning environments. We seem to be left with a narrow set of options. Some might be so bold as to suggest we have only one environment in Web world. Indeed, the authors of one survey (Boshier, et. al., 1997) complained about the prevalence of dreary lecture notes posted on the Web and asked if this was "innovative."

Principle Four: "Learning environments must include problem as well as knowledge-based learning. Problem-based learning involves higher-order thinking skills such as analysis, synthesis and evaluation while knowledge-based learning involves recall, comprehension and application."
Response: Learning about ideas also involves analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Problem-based learning, while useful for many purposes, is not (and should not be) the only show in town.

Principle Five: "Learning experiences should support interaction and the development of communities of interest. Learning is social and sensitive to context. Learning experiences based on collaboration support learning communities while building a support network to enhance learning outcomes. Multiple interactions, group collaboration and cooperative learning may provide increased levels of interaction and simulation."
Response: One characteristic of most education is the artificial nature of the learning groups we create (classes). As such, we cannot expect a support network to last any longer than a class is in session. Training within an organization might allow longer lasting support groups to be established.

Principle Six: "The practice of distance learning contributes to the larger social mission of education and training in a democratic society. Changing mental models and constructing new knowledge empowers learners and encourages critical thinking. Knowledge becomes a function of how the individual creates meaning from his or her experiences."
Response: This should be broadened to include a plurality of missions. While meaning-making is laudable not all education is concerned with meaning. This is what David Noble's harangue is about. He is not as concerned about the technology as about the purposes for which it is used. What is tucked inside the technology Trojan Horse?

Afterword: Whether adult education significantly informs Web learning and education remains to be seen. Right now, we need to study good practice. "Extension" used to involve "extending" the reach of the university. If the university loses its way in the Web, Extension will also get lost. Adult education as a discipline has a double lever for affecting higher education. One is as a university discipline, and thus an internal influence on the academy. The other is as an influence on the practice of adult education.

Holiday Jaunt or Home Invasion? Doctors in the Web

Mary Wilson[3]

A course on the World Wide Web should be attractive, interactive and accessible

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(Boshier, et. al., 1997). As well, there are two central questions for the adult educator:

- How can the course remain faithful to principles of adult education outside of a face-to-face setting, involving genuine interaction and respect for learners' experience?
- Can the course use the information-rich environment of the World Wide Web, so that online education is a benefit, not just a second-best alternative to face-to-face?

When the purpose is continuing professional education (CPE), course planners face an additional challenge. Courses must satisfy educators and participants **and** the standards of the professional accrediting body. From the perspective of some busy doctors, on-line CPE relieves pressure and feels like a bit of a holiday. For others, it constitutes a further assault on privacy and personal space - a "home invasion."

There are two types of CPE, each with a different focus. Some focus on a transfer of information (such as new treatments or drugs for physicians, updates in tax law for accountants). These may be presented in face-to-face sessions, or print-based or online distance education formats. Some professional journals include self-tests which can be completed and sent to an accrediting body for credit. Other courses focus on professional practice and encourage participants to learn from each other. Journal clubs, online and face-to-face discussion groups and workshops with a practice focus, are examples of this second type. The World Wide Web, with the software add-ons that allow for conferencing, lends itself to a combination of the two types. It is this combination that appeals to most family physicians.

I am working with family physicians to bring a continuing medical education course in geriatrics to the World Wide Web. We conducted focus groups with three groups of family physicians in B.C., Canada and found they're interested in the Web's potential for:

- Providing opportunities for convenient continuing professional education
- Allowing discussion with their colleagues over a longer period than is usually the case with face-to-face workshops
- Facilitating cross-discipline collaboration and discussion
- Fostering guided access to online resources

Interaction

To design an online course that takes advantage of the Web, meets the expectations of the professional participants and accrediting bodies and is congruent with principles of adult education, five types of interaction must be considered:

- Learner-Learner: There should be an opportunity for participants to share their own experiences and reactions to new material. In CPE, speaking with other participants provides a chance to collectively evaluate what is being presented. At least among family physicians, there tends to be cynicism about expert, hospital-based or specialist knowledge. For family physicians the opportunity to discuss things with others who work in a family practice must be at the heart of an effective Web-based course. If this chance for discussion is in place, there is no reason for it to terminate when the course is officially over. As part of our project's Website, we are developing a "Doctors lounge" to continue after the course has ended.
- Learner-Facilitator: The facilitator ideally provides new information and is the person responsible for encouraging discussion. The equality of individuals stressed in adult education is particularly clear in medical CPE, where many participants have facilitated

courses. Initially our course participants and facilitators will all be family physicians. We envision, in the future, expanding the program to include other health professionals involved in the care of the frail elderly, patient advocates and elderly people.

- Learner-Online information: Information management is a challenge for family physicians. Piles of journals, invitations to workshops and newsletters arrive in the average doctor's mailbox each month. Online courses must not aggravate the problem without providing a life-ring. In the course we are designing, access to information will include tutorials on the use of online search tools, and discussions of information management techniques and evaluation.
- Learner-Offline Environment: Learners' interactions with their own environment - their professional practice - have often been ignored. In CPE, lack of attention to this aspect of interaction sometimes means information may be absorbed but not applied. New models of CPE are attempting to overcome this gap.
- Learner-Technology: In a Web-based course, the first three forms of interaction take place against the background of learner-technology interaction. Via focus groups, we found family physicians have varied levels of computer expertise. It is important to provide meaningful levels of computer support, including tutorials, written instructions, help lines and an online forum where participants can share their expertise.

The Canadian College of Family Physicians adopted an approach to continuing education that encourages an interactive focus. Courses designed to meet College criteria must use Schon's reflective practitioner approach. Physicians will develop concerns based in their experience, frame questions, and find answers which integrates their practice. Evaluation for professional education credit will be based on the physician's analysis of their own success in integrating theory and practice.

Blurring the lines

A young physician in one of our focus groups unhappily said the "convenience" of online education means that what used to be "family time" is now used for online learning. This is a growing concern. If Web-based education comes to replace face-to-face CPE with a form of "home invasion" that further blurs the line between personal and professional life, it would be a dubious step forward indeed. Whether the Web can incorporate the best principles of adult education remains to be seen.

Does Illich Point to the Net and Say "I Told You So?"

Patricia Reeves[4]

What significance can be attached to the fact the Starr Report on US Presidential dalliances was launched not in newspapers but on the World Wide Web? Just as the Gulf War redefined network television news, Clinton's sex life forever positioned the Web as an instrument for informal learning which, as Faure (1972) and others noted, is a vital component in an architecture of lifelong education. Has Ivan Illich's utopian notion of a deschooled society finally arrived? If citizens can get what they need with a mouse why endure teachers, schools and arcane professors arguing about "needs," "reflection" and "positionality"? Who needs it?

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One ought not engage in too many techno-utopian excesses. Yet it is undeniable that the Web provides a rich venue for informal learning. Like the best forms of adult education, informal learning is organized around real-life experience and is often tacit, non-institutional and non-routine. The learner does their own "program planning." The learner is in control. But are these developments congruent with principles of adult education?

Many attributes of andragogy are embodied in the best forms of Web learning. In the first place, the Web provides an accessible context for many (mostly privileged) adults to learn things they need to know. If adults are intrinsically motivated to learn, as Knowles claims, the Internet expedites the process. The Web also provides a way for adults to assume control of their learning. Part of its appeal is the fact users plan, carry out, and evaluate their own learning. Are these the hallmarks of self-directed learning? Is there enough in the Web to lure Allen Tough away from extra-terrestrials and back to learning projects?

Think about your own learning endeavors. Did you turn to the Web to learn something about this conference? Affordable airfare to Chicago? Did you check the permanent AERC website up in Vancouver? [http://www.educ.ubc.ca/edst/aerc/]. Citizens daily learn in formal, nonformal but, most importantly in this context, informal settings.

Learning occurs in informal settings for a host of reasons - from seeking information that satisfies curiosity to securing data that may save lives. Activities taking place in natural settings (e.g., work, home) primarily involve learners themselves. The Web greatly facilitates self-directed learning. Yet learning in informal settings gets little respect in many adult education circles. Is this due to the tacit belief that learning activities undertaken without institutional direction threatens vested interests? This concern lies at the heart of higher education discourse about distributed learning and distance education. Yet, not embracing informal learning also threatens adult education. At a time when departments of adult education are being dismantled we must demonstrate the unique educational contributions our field can make. We must broaden our conceptual lens as to what constitutes "real learning." At the turn of the century this is a good time to endorse a variety of arenas for learning and education.

Learning activities undertaken on the Web are ideally suited to the needs of adult learners. The Web provides a fertile venue for informal and self-directed learning activities. It promotes self-direction, demands active engagement by the learner and is poised to respond to the readiness to learn characteristic of the adult learner. On the Web, information (which does not always constitute "education") is literally at one's fingertips, 24 hours a day.

Access and equity are moribund issues in many parts of the USA. A recent report by the American Library Association revealed that 73% of US public libraries offer Internet access, and this number will increase. E-rate discounts on telecommunications, have been made to insure that libraries, particularly those in rural and poor areas, can afford to go online. A study of Internet use among HIV-positive adults found economic factors were not the most pressing concerns about Internet use (Reeves, 1998). Almost half the participants were not computer owners but still regular Internet users. Access is a multifaceted issue, and concerns focused solely on economic considerations are too narrowly focused. Access is more than just a matter of money.

What opportunities does the Internet provide for adult educators? For one, we can use the unprecedented access to learning opportunities that it provides to revisit our goals as educators. Ryder and Wilson (1996) maintain that "since we can no longer filter and select proper materials for our students, our highest calling as educators will be to support students in developing such discipline for themselves" (p. 651). We can also stake more of a claim on instructional design to insure conformity to the principles of adult learning. We in Adult Education have too long let "design" be handled by instructional technologists.

The nautical metaphor behind this symposium is apt. Opportunities to support informal learning ventures abound for adult educators, and we must take on the challenges -- for our own survival and because of the historic Adult Education commitment to learners in all walks of life. Certain kinds of education made possible by the Internet could be congruent with principles of adult education. With a new century looming, the adult education flotilla is sailing into seas filled with Nets. Do we plough ahead, huffing, puffing and making waves, return to shore, or practice what we preach - try to figure out what to do. To paraphrase a man more familiar with fish than electronic nets this is a good time to ask "Think what the Net means for adult education and what adult education means for the Net?"

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For Adults Only:
Queer Theory Meets the Self and Identity in Adult Education

Ann Brooks and Kathleen Edwards

Abstract: This article brings the perspective of "Queer theory" to the field of Adult Education as a way of examining critically the notions of self, identity, and sexuality as they have been taken for granted within the field. Adult Education, like most fields of practice and research, assumes the Western ideals of the monadic self, clear and undisputed identities, and heterosexuality. However, the intersection of a strong postmodern voice in both academia and the popular culture, the increasing exploration of other-than-hetero-sexualities in the media, and the foregrounding of sexuality in the work of adult education researchers (Brooks & Edwards,1997; Edwards, 1997; Hill,1995; Edwards, Grace, Henson, B., Henson, W., Hill, & Taylor, 1998; Tisdell & Taylor, 1995) forces the question of what relevance Queer theory has for adult educators.

The Birth of Queer Theory

The term "Queer theory" was first coined by Teresa de Lauretis (1991) in a special edition on gay and lesbian sexualities in a feminist cultural studies journal. Queer theory continues the postmodernist project of playing with the boundaries of such sacred binaries as male-female and black-white by deconstructing the heterosexual-homosexual bifurcation of sexual identity. The lavender-haired stepchild of postmodernism, Queer theory has quickly developed a multidisciplinary or even "postdisciplinary" approach to theorizing, attracting scholars from a wide array of social science disciplines.

Sociologist Steven Seidman (1996) attempts to describe the advent of this academic adolescent:

> Queer theory has accrued multiple meanings, from a merely useful shorthand way to speak of all gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered experiences to a theoretical sensibility that pivots on transgression or permanent rebellion. I take as central to Queer theory its challenge to what has been the dominant foundational concept of both homophobic and affirmative homosexual theory: the assumption of a unified homosexual identity. I interpret Queer theory as contesting this foundation and therefore the very telos of Western homosexual politics. (p. 11)

In spite of the fact that Queer theory has at its heart a state of permanent rebellion reminiscent of critical theory, challenging the hegemony of indelible identity categories and presumably making space for new ones, many marginalized social groups find Queer theory to be a serious threat to identity politics. Certainly many gay and lesbian political activists fear the erasure of the lives of real people in the complexity of Queer theory's linguistic theorizing.

For adult education, a field with a strong commitment to organizing and political action, such apparent academic detachment, dissolution of polarized identities, and destabilization of a bounded and clearly designated self, Queer theory can be seen as an unwelcome newcomer. This is all the more so in that Queer theorists view themselves as bringing with them a radical and liberating new perspective, a mission with which adult educators have frequently identified. In many ways, Queer theorists seem to be coopting the mission of radical politics, but diluting its strength by doing away with clear identities around which to organize. Still, the opportunity to question the unitary and bounded nature of the self and the singular and permanent nature of identity deserves the serious consideration of all social science scholars.

Three theorists stand out as early contributors to what has become known as Queer theory. The first is Michel Foucault whose History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction

(1978) first utilized sexuality as a source of knowledge to problematize power, and to position discourse as a form of resistance. Eve Sedgwick (1990,1993) situated same-sex desire at the center of her epistemology and her scholarly dissection of the heterosexual-homosexual binary led to the legitimization of gay and lesbian studies in academic settings. Finally, Judith Butler (1990, 1993) illustrated the performative nature of gender and brought the male-female binary into question.

While the initial aims of Queer theory were to deconstruct and trouble the heterosexual-homosexual binary taken for granted in our culture, its purpose of critiquing "normal" may be expanding as Jagose (1996) describes:

> Queer has tended to occupy a predominantly sexual register. Recent signs indicate, however, that its denaturalizing project is being brought to bear on other axes of identification than sex and gender. Sedgwick (1993:9) makes an even stronger claim when she observes that, in recent work, 'queer is being spun outward along dimensions that can't be subsumed under gender and sexuality at all: the ways that race, ethnicity, postcolonial nationality criss-cross with these *and other* identity-constituting, identity-fracturing discourses, for example.' (p. 99)

It is through the problematization of normalcy that Queer theory offers the most important challenge to the "taken-for-granteds" of adult education. Tierney notes:

> The point of saying, 'We're queer,' is that it highlights difference in an effort to expose norms. In effect, we are outlaws--socially, intellectually, and linguistically. . . .we should challenge commonly accepted notions of reality; by doing so, we become academic outlaws. (1997, p.29).

As adult educators the opportunity to challenge our pedagogy, our scholarship, and our own identities as academic outlaws is one we can hardly resist.

Why Care about Queer?

One of the questions we have to ask ourselves as adult educators is why we should care about Queer theory? We might especially wonder this if we have never thought of ourselves as "queer" and have more or less taken it for granted that we are "straight". A discussion of a few of the possibilities are explored here:

(1) Sexuality as a site of learning. Charles Lemert, in his preface to Queer Theory / Sociology (1996), tells us that the reason all of society (and we would add adult educators) should care about Queer theory is that it challenges the limitations we place on how we structure and label our lives:

> Queer theory is one of the most important developments in social theory today precisely because it has so devastatingly completed the process of queering the naïve assumptions of our most cherished traditions. Earlier developments in race, feminist, and postcolonial theories have disabused the social and human sciences (as well as sturdier souls in the general public) of the naïve modernist notion that "all men are created equal"--that humans are, thereby, of one ideal, universal kind. Queer theory, in effect, completes the process, which, as Seidman reminds us, Weber called the disenchantment of social life. Once gay and lesbian social experience is disenchanted of its negative status as a form of deviant behavior, we who have neither enjoyed nor suffered the experience itself begin to see just what we have denied for so long. We can see that desire and sexuality are very much more than mere, even minor, features of social life. They are, in fact, constitutive elements every bit as central as race, gender, or class. (p.viii)

So the foregrounding of sexuality in research and education serves to break the silence that has traditionally surrounded sexuality in scholarly settings. Sexuality is a subject fraught with moral and commercial exploitation. We have few sites within our culture within which a person or group of persons can explore their own sexuality or sexuality as a social phenomenon. As adult educators, we must help open spaces where sexuality can be explored rather than exploited.

(2) Normalcy as an obstacle to learning. Perhaps no greater barrier to learning exists than the hegemony of normalcy and the specification of deviancy. Individuals who deviate from the norm are typically viewed as morally bad, intellectually wrong, psychologically pathological, politically incorrect, or socially inferior. However, if we can truly engage the differences in others and ourselves, the differences are what are likely to be our most powerful teachers. In fact, the privileging of "exorbitant normality" (Spivak, 1992) enables just the sort of blindness that inhibits reflection and critical reflection on ourselves and our societies and permits the smugness and bigotry that can no longer have a place in a multicultural world. In sexual terms, Warner (1993) refers to the normative assumption that heterosexual relationships are the only form of sexual intimacy in this society as "heteronormativity." Such a taken-for-granted perspective on sexuality has kept us from making space for and acknowledging other sexualities among those adults with whom we work, and has made us blind to the questions of heterosexual development, not to mention queer sexual development.

(3) Building learning communities on identities of difference. Identity has traditionally been seen as an individual "possession" that links us to others like us and allows us to form communities. Identity politics have always depended on separateness and exclusion for its political power.

In this vein, many other-than-heterosexual identity communities have proliferated over the last three decades. However, the struggle with naming that occurs in the attempt to be inclusive can border on comical. Are we gay and lesbian or bisexual, gay, lesbian, and transgendered, or what? The appeal of Queer is that it offers an identity label of sexual possibility. Rather than being limiting, identity becomes mutable and contextual. As recent research on women's sexual development is beginning to indicate (Brooks, 1999), sexuality for women at any rate is not at all the stable experience most people assume. Queer theory enables differences that may defy current categorization to emerge, and it makes space for the unimaginable as well as the silenced. Relevant to our discussion of adult education, Britzman (1998) notes that pedagogy must be seen ". . . as a technique for acknowledging difference *as the only condition of possiblity for community*" (p. 56). To build the open learning communities adult educators value, we have to build on identification with our differences, not our similarities.

(4) Creating learning by exceeding the Self. Westerners are extremely attached to Self. Much of our identity is derived from our individual, unitary, and bounded Selves. We guard the boundaries of the Self against all encroachments. Our assumptions and beliefs about Self are jealously protected and only given up on a one-to-one exchange basis after much thought and angst.

Kathy recalls her sister expressing concern about some behavior her teenage niece was exhibiting that her sister feared would reflect poorly on her parenting skills. In that disdainful voice that only a teenager can assume her niece responded, "Oh mother, get over yourself." And indeed, the message about learning is that we all have to "get over" our Selves. Only by surrendering Self and allowing our learning about others' differences and identities to exceed our own Selves can we ever hope to be the adult learners and educators we want to be. Certainly sexuality with its multiple stigmatized positions and many private meanings puts pressure on our ability to exceed our Self in order to learn.

In and Out of the Queer Classroom

In discussing her own concept of queer pedagogy, Deborah Britzman (1995) asks the question, “Can gay and lesbian theories become relevant not just for those who identify as gay or lesbian but for those who do not?” (p. 151) As adult educators, our work is much less encumbered than public school educators by the culture of fear and history of persecution directed at those whose sexuality or gender identifications are different from the norm. For many of us, the barriers to “queering” our classrooms are those we maintain ourselves. To test this, we can ask ourselves the questions,” When was the last time I facilitated a discussion or introduced material about sexuality in my classroom?” or “What do I do to make it safe for those who are sexually ‘different’ to talk (or not) about their lives?” What follows are a few concrete suggestions for “queering” adult education, regardless of how we ourselves are identifying at the moment.

(1) Acknowledge our own positions as learners. We cannot be the only “knowers” in the classroom when it comes to difference. While it is risky to admit ignorance for any teacher, knowledge claims in relation to identity can only inhibit learning. It is only in a spirit of inquiry that we can hope to engage those with identifications different from my own. In the area of sexuality, we are all ignorant of positions other than our own. Silence about sexuality has to be broken for dialogue to occur.

(2) Admit our own mistakes. Annie once taught an advanced research class in which 80% of the class were minorities. One of the white women made a racist comment that struck the class silent. Out of her own fear and embarrassment Annie moved on with the content. Only after reflecting on the class for a week was she able to return and admit to the class that she had made a mistake and that if we cannot discuss conflicts around difference in the classroom, where can we discuss it? The ensuing student-driven discussion filled the entire class time.

(3) Affirm difference by making space for students to speak from their own “different” experience. Set this climate by asking different class members about their experiences. By privileging difference, we can assist our students in developing affinities and alliances with each other that lend themselves to learning, although not necessarily to comfort and harmony.

Still, in terms of sexuality or any other differences, students need to be able to make choices about engaging their differences in public. For example, a common assumption in today's times is that a person who identifies as gay or lesbian should just “come out” in the classroom. In reality, the subtleties of sexual identity are more complex than that, and we have no right to take away students’ choices about what they share about their lives, particularly their sexual selves. Even a simple icebreaker that asks students to identify as single or married can put the person with a non-heterosexual identity in a quandary of how to answer.

(4) Abandon the search for certainty. As educators we often find comfort and security in presenting ourselves to our students as knowers and experts. This tendency is exacerbated by students’ expectations on us. Nevertheless, by leaving knowledge permanently partial and holding our own assumptions in abeyance, we can be more honest in our teaching.

Relevant to sexual identity, we cannot have answers, only questions. If sexual identity is indeed as fluid as Queer theorists suggest, then we can not discuss sexuality with any degree of certainty at all. We can only hold our own learning open and refrain from premature foreclosure ourselves, and thus model permanent disruption and inquiry ourselves. (5) Think beyond the boundaries. Much of education and scholarship has been focused on bounding knowledge--ordering it in hierarchical categories in order to make it simple and understandable. But, as Robert Kegan (1996) points out, we are truly “in over our heads” whether or not we wish to be. With the complex change we confront daily, we can no longer pretend that knowledge can be tightly bounded. In fact, the learning project of this generation of adult learners must be to loosen the bonds and break the boundaries we have spent centuries creating. Thinking "out of the box" cannot happen when the box is so tightly sealed.

The heterosexual/homosexual binary is the product of an epistemology of closure. The terms did not even exist until recently. Sexologists at the turn of the century medicalized and stigmatized sexual behavior by creating neat categories of deviancy ostensibly to "treat" sexual disorders. (Katz, 1995) But just as Queer theory calls upon us to think about sexuality beyond a man and a woman "doing it" in the missionary position, it also compels us to identify other areas of knowledge we have looked at so narrowly. Queer theory not only makes sexuality visible again, it also asks us to disrupt other bounded areas of knowledge and bring to the forefront the voices those taxonomies of knowledge have produced.

Queer theory uses the mostly silent stories of sexuality and desire to question the ways in which we limit our own and others' lives and learning. It raises the question that if as a field we accept uncritically the categories and narratives conventionally provided us by our culture and society, are we both limiting the ways in which adults can grow and constraining the ways and places in which adult educators can help adults learn. Queer theory brings sexuality and desire into adult education practice, forcing us to address the ways in which they are present in our classrooms, our own identities, and our own learning as adults.

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Perspectives on Adult Learning: Framing Our Research

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Abstract: Based on a review of the literature we describe the assumptions and salient concepts of two major perspectives on adult learning: the individual and the contextual. We then argue that although research should continue to be grounded in these two perspectives, we should expand our research efforts in a third paradigm consisting of an integration of these two perspectives.

Introduction

Research in adult learning has been framed by two primary perspectives on how we work with adult learners: the individual and the contextual. Based on a comprehensive and critical review of the literature, we first describe the assumptions and salient concepts and ideas that have emerged from each of these two major perspectives. We then argue while both perspectives should continue to inform our research and practice, we advocate that greater recognition be given to a third paradigm, that of an integrative approach to learning in adulthood. In this integrative approach, both the individual and the contextual perspectives are interwoven in framing research agendas and responding to problems of practice.

The Individual Perspective

Until recently, the individual perspective, driven by the psychological paradigm, was the predominate way we thought about learning in adulthood (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Two basic assumptions form the foundation for this perspective. The first is that learning is something that happens internally, primarily inside of our heads. In essence the outside environment is given little if any attention in the way we think and learn. Second, this perspective is based on the assumption we can construct a set of principles and competencies that can assist all adults to be more effective learners, no matter what their background or current life situation. A sampling of topics grounded primarily in this perspective include participation and motivation (Boshier & Collins 1985), self-directed learning (Tough, 1971), andragogy (Knowles, 1970), transformational learning (Mezirow, 1991), memory and learning (Ormord, 1995), and the neurobiology of learning (Sylwester, 1995). Three of these topics are discussed to illustrate this perspective: participation, self-directed learning, and transformational learning.

Participation is one of the more throughly studied areas in adult education. We have a sense of who participants, what is studied, and what motivates some adults and not others to enroll in a course or independent learning project. Beginning with the landmark study of Johnstone and Rivera (1965), other national studies have sought to describe adult learning (for example, Valentine, 1997). What is interesting is that the original profile put forth by Johnston and Rivera (1965) has changed little over the past thirty years. Compared to those who do not participate, participants in adult education are better educated, younger, have higher incomes, and are most likely to be white and employed full time.

The accumulation of descriptive information about participation has led to efforts to build models that try to convey the complexity of the phenomenon. This work on determining why people participate, that is the underlying motivational structure for participation, has been carried on most notably by Boshier and others using Boshier's Educational Participation Scale (EPS) (Boshier and Collins,1985; Fujita-Starck, 1996). Between three and seven factors have been delineated to explain why adults participate, such as expectations of others, educational preparation, professional advancement, social stimulation, and cognitive interest. A number of other models, grounded in characteristics of individual learners, have been developed to further explain participation; several of these models also link a more sociological or contextual approach with that of the individual backgrounds of learners (for example, Sissel, 1997).

Although learning on one's own or self-directed learning has been the primary mode of learning throughout the ages, systematic studies in this arena did not become prevalent until the 1970s and the 1980s (Caffarella & O'Donnell, 1987). The majority of this work draws from humanistic philosophy, which posits personal growth as the goal of adult learning. Therefore, understanding how individuals go about the process of learning on their own and what attributes can be associated with learners who are self-directed have been the two major threads of this research tradition. The process of self-directed learning was first conceived as primarily linear, using much of the same language we used to describe learning processes in formal settings (Knowles, 1970; Tough, 1971). The emphasis was placed on what skills and competencies learners needed to be self-directed in their learning endeavors. As more complex models were developed, this emphasis began to shift to viewing the self-directed learning process as much more of a trail and error activity, with many loops and curves. In addition, as in the participation literature, contextual aspects of the process, such as the circumstances learners found themselves within, were found to also be important (Brockett & Hiemstra, 1991; Garrison, 1997).

Transformational learning theory is a third area of research focusing on the individual perspective. First articulated by Mezirow in 1978, transformational learning theory is about change--dramatic, fundamental changes in the way individuals see themselves and the world in which they live (Mezirow,1991). The mental constructions of experience, inner meaning, and critical self-reflection are common components of this approach. Adults examine the underlying assumptions on which they have built their lives. This self-reflection is often triggered by a major dilemma or problem, and may be undertaken individually as well as collectively with others who share similar problems or dilemmas. The end result of this process is a change in one's perspective. Although there are also a number of writers who have or would like to connect this transformational learning process more to social action than individual change, the predominate work has been and continues to be done from the individual perspective (Taylor, 1997).

The Contextual Perspective

The contextual perspective takes into account two important elements: the interactive nature of learning and the structural aspects of learning grounded in a sociological framework. Although the contextual perspective is not new to adult learning, it has resurfaced as an important consideration over the past decade (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999; Tennant & Pogson, 1995). The interactive dimension acknowledges that learning can not be separated from the context in which the learning takes place. In other words, the learner's situation and the learning context are as important to the learning process as what the individual learner and/or instructor brings to that situation. Recent theories of learning from experience (Bateson, 1994); situated cognition (Wilson, 1993), cognitive and intellectual development (Kegan, 1994), and writings on reflective practice (Boud & Walker, 1992; Boud & Miller, 1996) inform this dimension of the contextual approach. In exploring the interactive dimension of the contextual perspective we describe situated cognition and reflective practice.

In situated cognition, one cannot separate the learning process from the situation in which the learning takes place. Knowledge and the process of learning within this framework are viewed as "a product of the activity, context, and culture in which it is developed and used" (Brown, Collins, & Duguid, 1989, p. 32). The proponents of the situated view of learning argue that learning for everyday living (which includes our practice as professionals) happens only "among people acting in culturally organized settings" (Wilson, 1993, p. 76). In other words the physical and social experiences and situations in which learners find themselves and the tools they use in that experience are integral to the entire learning process. One important idea that emanates from making the assumption that learning and knowing are primarily a cultural phenomenon moves the study of learning into the social and political realm and raises the issues of knowledge and power as legitimate aspects of adult learning.

The tenants of situated cognition are often played out in the more recent depictions of reflective practice (Wilson, 1993). Reflective practice allows us to make judgements in complex and murky situations--judgements based on experience and prior knowledge--while we are still engaged in that practice. Three major assumptions undergird the process of reflective practice from a contextual standpoint: (1) those involved in reflective practice are committed to both problem finding and problem solving; (2) reflective practice means making judgments about what actions will be taken in a particular situation; and (3) issues of power and oppression in the judgment making process need to be addressed. The most predominate way adult educators have incorporated an interactive reflective mode is through what Schon (1987) has termed "reflection-in-action". Reflection-in-action assists us in reshaping "what we are doing while we are doing it" (Schon, 1987, p. 26), and is often characterized as being able to "think on our feet". In addition to Schon's work, useful models of reflective practice include the work of Boud and Walker (1992) and Boud and Miller (1996).

The second dimension of the contextual perspective, the structural dimension, argues that factors such a race, class, gender, and ethnicity need to be taken into consideration in the learning process. Being white or of color or being male or female, for example, does influence the way we learn and even what we learn. The structural dimension of adult learning is interwoven into a number of research strands, such as work on adult cognitive development (Goldberger, 1996), adult development and learning (Pratt, 1991), participation studies (Sparks, 1998), and indigenous learning (Cajete, 1994).

The strongest voices for the structural dimension are those scholars writing from a feminist, critical, or postmodern viewpoint (Collins, 1995; Freire, 1970; Hayes & Colin, 1994; Tisdell, 1998; Usher, Bryant & Johnston, 1997; Welton,1995). Those studying adult learning from these theoretical perspectives ask questions regarding whose interests are being served by the programs being offered, who really has access to these programs, and who has the control to make changes in the learning process and outcomes. Our assumptions about the nature of knowledge--including what counts as knowledge, where it is located, and how it is acquired--are also challenged. Fundamental to these questions are the themes of power and oppression in both the process and organization of the learning enterprise. Are those who hold the power really operating in the best interests of those being educated? Do our behaviors and actions as educators actually reenforce our power positions, or do they acknowledge and use the experiences and knowledge of those with whom we work, especially those who have been traditionally under-represented in our adult learning programs (the poor, people of color)? Do we use our power as instructors and leaders in adult education to either avoid or ban discussions about the importance of race, gender, ethnicity, and class and the adult learning enterprise?

Linking the Perspectives

We believe that research in adult education should continue to be done from both the individual and contextual perspectives. For example, what we are currently learning about the neurobiology of learning has the potential for greatly expanding our knowledge about learning disabilities in adulthood, the importance of emotions in the learning process, and how biological changes in adulthood are linked to learning. Likewise, we still need more in-depth exploration of both the interactive and structural dimensions of the contextual aspects of learning, including such areas as reflective practice, and the influence of race, gender, class, and ethnicity on how and what adults learn. In addition, we strongly support the further development of research that links the individual and contextual perspectives. An integrative perspective means conceptualizing learning in adulthood using a combination of two major lens or frames: (1) an awareness of individual learners and how they learn; and (2) and an understanding of how the context shapes learners, instructors, and the learning transaction itself.

A number of adult education scholars acknowledge the importance of taking into account both the individual and contextual aspects of adult learning. Their work provide a starting place for researchers who want to focus on the integrative perspective of learning in adulthood. For example, Jarvis (1987) writes "that learning is not just a psychological process that happens in splendid isolation from the world in which the learner lives, but that it is intimately related to that world and affected by it "(p.11). Likewise, Tennant and Pogson (1995) highlight both psychological and social development and their relationship to adult learning. They stress that "the nature, timing, and processes of development will vary according to the experiences and opportunities of individuals and the circumstances in their lives" (Tennant & Pogson, 1995, p. 197). And, Heaney (1995) observes that "a narrow focus on individual--in-the-head images of learning--separates learning from its social contents, both the social relations which are reproduced in us and the transformative consequences of our learning on society" (p. 149). Rather from Heaney's perspective, "learning is an individual's ongoing negotiation with communities of practice which ultimately gives definition to both self and that practice" (p. 148). In a more practical vein, Pratt and Associates (1998) outline five alternative frames for understanding teaching, some of which capture both the individual and contextual nature of adult learning.

Some researchers have even confirmed that the integrative perspective of learning can provide rich frameworks for thinking about specific aspects of adult learning. For example, Sissel (1997), in her ethnographic investigation of Head Start as a setting for adult education, found that both individual and contextual factors influenced the participation and the learning of the parents involved with the Head Start Program. More specifically, the positive and negative interactions of parents and staff, which were influenced by issues of both power and control, lead her to propose a "three part framework regarding the interaction of the concepts of capacity, power, and connection" to explain the participation and learning of this specific population. Likewise, Fleming (1998) also found that contextual and individual factors surfaced as influencing both what and how adults learn in residential learning experiences. Her respondents first affirmed that the context of learning, that is being in residence, did indeed make a difference. "Participants learned through being *immersed* in their learning, and being able to focus for uninterrupted periods of time and with greater intensity than usual...[In addition], they learned about themselves and others as a result of being forced by the demands of living together *to go beyond their own comfort limits of personal interaction.* Although uncomfortable, participants valued this learning" (p. 266). Her subjects also spoke about individual changes that resulted as a result of their learning. For some the changes were short-term and directly linked to the time they were in residence, such as expanding their self-awareness and feeling more personally creative in their learning. Others described changes that were long-lasting in nature, as "individuals underwent *personal transformations*, related primarily to developing more positive feelings about themselves, and the decisions they had made, and could make in their lives" (p. 267). As a result of her findings, Fleming has proposed an organizational framework of residential learning that encompasses both individual and contextual elements, and links these elements together through two overarching themes of detachment and continuity.

In conclusion, we advocate that more research be undertaken from an integrative framework. While we are well aware of the challenges of studying adult education from this integrative perspective, we believe that accounting for both the individual learner and context of the learning offers the greatest potential for advancing our understanding of the complex phenomenem of adult learning.

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Enemies or Learning Partners? The Interplay of Power and Learning in a Cross Boundary Work Group

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Abstract: This study investigated power relationships in a cross boundary health care work group. The study found that power within groups is more fluid and flexible than previous studies suggested. Factors that influence power levels and their impact on learning are discussed.

Introduction

Today as work organizations and the work they do becomes more complex and competitive the decisions and actions of individuals often occur within the context of a work team. Teams are the focal point of how organizations engage in such learning tasks as strategic planning, process improvement, or developing and improving new services (Parker, 1994, Brooks, 1992, 1994). Team-based problem solving has moved beyond organizational walls to accommodate the nature of today's business problems. Staff crosses boundaries when they work, on either short or long term basis, to solve problems by collective discussion and inquiry. Organizational conditions can provide support for working across functional, divisional, and hierarchical lines, such as cross boundary interaction (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Given the nature of today's workplace wherein work often occurs across organizational lines, there is a need to understand how such groups engage in real-time learning in order to solve problems.

One of many workplace environments undergoing work reorganization is health care. This particular industry is in the process of redesign and upheaval due to the impact of managed care. The missing element in most health care delivery systems is a virtual lack of integration of these components (Witt, Kieffer, Ford, Hadelman, & Lloyd, 1993). The health care work environment is shifting from within institutional walls to working with the extended or integrated delivery system of care that spans across geographic regions and across organizational lines. This creates particular challenges from an Adult Education perspective for the preparation of staff and the possibility of utilizing this forum as a learning experience for personal, professional and organizational benefit. While working in the health care environment, I was curious as to the relationship of power between competitive organizations as it relates to the learning process of a cross boundary work group. This paper provides an overview of the findings related to power and learning in a seven-month study.

Background and Theoretical Framework

From particular studies in the literature regarding learning as a collective team activity there is focus on the adult learning process (Dechant, Marsick, & Kasl, 1993); notion of dialogue in collective team learning (Cicourel, 1990; Dixon, 1994); capture of reflective and communicative behavior (Purser, Pasmore &Tenkasi, 1992); distribution of formal power to individual team members and the collective team-learning outcome of productive useful new knowledge (Brooks, 1994); and a study of factors affecting group learning with a distinction between learning and task in relation to group purpose (Marsick & Kasl, 1997). This study addressed research needs as described by Goodman, Ravlin, & Schminke (1990); and Brooks (1994) in the following way: (a) within the natural context of workgroup activity rather than artificial; (b) chose a cross boundary work group that was charged with improving the way in which care is delivered to a population of patients to maximize impact; and (c) examined a work group that developed new protocols.

Today the ways we make meaning of ideas, distribute privilege and power, are held accountable to validity testing through rational dialogue. Communicative or dialogic learning is explained as achieving coherence, a critique of relevant social norms, cultural codes and a critique of the assertion itself. As such, meaning is validated through critical discourse, and each item of relevant information becomes a building block of understanding (Mezirow, 1991). I looked to the reflective learning theory literature to provide a foundation for the study. By definition the focus of reflection is not a purely internal thinking process, but also involves action. What gives reflection its' character and significance is thought-in-action immersed within a context. The process of reflection and critical reflection helps us to adjust the distortions in our beliefs, and our errors in problem solving (Schön, 1987; Mezirow, 1991). Within a work group context, reflective learning becomes generative of new thinking as members challenge one another's thinking, reframe their perspectives, and build on integrated perspectives to construct new knowledge (Mezirow, 1991; Dechant, Marsick, & Kasl, 1993). Learning through critical reflection provides a transformation of personal frames of reference, and can be described as a "holistic" blend including personal development, work related knowledge, and skills (Marsick, 1991, p. 24).

Research Design

Since space restrictions prevent a detailed discussion of the research design, this is necessarily a brief summary (see Carkhuff, 1998 for a more thorough discussion). Following Denzin & Lincoln (1994), a qualitative, phenomenological method was selected as the appropriate methodology to made sense out of their work group experience. The central question addressed was: What meaning do participants give to learning when working within a cross boundary work group? Sub-questions were developed after the first round of interviews, during the observations, prior to second interviews. These sub-questions were (1) How do the participants perceive their assumptions about learning affect collective work group learning? (2) How does the group share knowledge and ideas? (3) How do differences in formal power distribution between individual work group participants affect the meaning of learning for participants?

The particular cross boundary work group called the Diabetes Awareness Team, or DAT, was selected based on the criteria of an effective group (Goodman & Associates, 1986). The eleven group members had a range of four to over twenty-five years of work experience, and varied clinical and administrative roles in five competing health organizations located in a metropolitan area in Pennsylvania. They were charged by their respective organizations to work towards developing a plan that would improve health care for at-risk diabetic patients within this metropolitan area. The various health care organizations sending representatives to this work group had a long history of inter-agency rivalry and competition on who would provide services to the diabetic population. The expressed goal for the DAT was to improve the diagnosis, reduce the number of complications and contain increasing cost of treatment through education, collaboration and organizational cooperation. The members' organizational roles were as follows: Diabetic Nurse Educators, Home Health Nurse, Pharmacist, Rehabilitation Specialist, Health Promotions Administrator, Business Executive, Community Health Workers, and a Staff Development Specialist. The membership included nine Caucasian, one African American and one Latino, of which nine were female, and two were male.

The data collection was divided into two phases. Phase One included: a) pilot interview and subsequent refinement of the interview tool; b) an initial sixty-minute interview regarding social-biographical information, past work group experiences, and a problem solving critical incident; five work group observations with field notes; and document analysis of all agendas, reports, and meeting minutes (Flanagan, 1954; Ericsson & Simon, 1980). I attended all work group meetings over the six-month period, took field notes, and tape-recorded all interviews. I related this to the initial interview information to validate information gathered, and to plan for clarification and additional questions based on the observations during the ninety- minute Phase Two interview. All Phase One and Phase Two data were analyzed in light of the multiple data sources in a continuous process in that I sorted, coded, and interpreted on an ongoing basis throughout the seven month period (Patton, 1990). I verified authenticity of the data analysis through the triangulation and use of multiple sources (Lincoln and Guba, 1985), corroborated through member checks and peer review. Taken together these sources provided a holistic picture of the work group experience.

Findings

This paper focuses on the issue of how power relationships affected learning (see Carkhuff, 1998 for additional findings). One significant finding was that the individual members' power level within the work group was flexible and changeable. Despite the competition between the organizations, the unifying factor in the group was the overall concern for the care of the diabetic patient across the region. The power that members brought to the group by virtue of their individual expert knowledge and life experience shaped the learning experience for themselves and others; and had significant influence on the outcome of the group work. Thus despite their "placement" of themselves in various power statuses, the members of the group perceived power connected to one's as expertise in diabetic health care, whether as consumer or clinician, as centrally important. The members' role in the active work, and the value of their expertise for the production of new knowledge as seen by the group was intricately related. Power levels of members fluctuated as their role with active work changed. Another way that members with lower power raised their power was through "sponsorship" by a higher power member. For example, one team member was a diabetic patient. He was "invited" to assist in the problem solving as a member of the DAT by a member who as a diabetic educator, had a great deal of clinical expertise. The diabetic entered with a lower power as a non-clinical person but because of his sponsorship by the diabetic educator, he soon became an active work participant, and as such his power level increased. He described his participation as "an opportunity for learning. that's what this group is all about". He spoke of his role changing to "learner", and on occasion "educator".

The group leadership style ranged from a combination of supportivity and inclusivity to occasionally allowing lower power members only supportive roles. Of the members with initial low power, two were community workers who directly reported to the person who was the group's facilitator and one was a businessman, outside the health care industry. Since the group's problem solving revolved around solutions for diabetics, their initial status could be attributed to their absence of clinical expertise. Data gathered over many months indicated that the power level of an individual member was directly related to the perceived value of their contribution to the work group goal despite the facilitator's occasional disempowering leadership. For example, both community workers remained at a lower power level until the last DAT meeting. The group facilitator had consistently assigned them tasks during work group meetings instead of allowing the two to volunteer for assignments. The group facilitator also reported the status of their active work for them instead of asking them to report to the group. The two community workers became actively involved when assigned an active work role together, to make bilingual flyers to communicate the project event to the region. During the last DAT meeting, one worker presented the flyers (both English and Spanish versions) herself to the DAT because the group facilitator did not know they were completed. The other DAT members immediately embraced the work they (even though one community worker was absent), had accomplished as this became the vehicle of communication across the region for the project event. Several higher power (clinical expert) members focused their attention to her and revolved the decision making and problem solving around the issues of communication. The community worker for the first time took an active role in the problem solving, and the group facilitator was diminished to a medium power level for the entire meeting. The worker described this meeting as a pivotal point for her. She saw an "opportunity to teach others" regarding outreach to the urban citizens. Her experience in the DAT shifted from the learner to the educator role, her power from low to medium level. This rise in status within the group was a migration of role directly related to how the members perceived the active work role related to the problem solving at hand, as the two community workers were transformed in their active work roles, and assumed leadership as "educators" of the group related to issues of how to handle communication and planning relative to the minority diabetic population. This contribution to the mission of the group was direct and provided an enduring power shift, a transformational learning experience for the two community workers, and produced new knowledge for the group.

The issue of race and the accompanying cultural differences mattered in the work group experience for the two minority members. When they were faced with an issue or problem to solve in the DAT they saw it through the lens of race and culture, and how decisions would impact their diabetic "communities". They faced issues of symbolism related to the use of agendas and reports, access to care and education, and language barriers while the other members were concentrating on clinical protocols. Related to this issue was the importance of specific cultural norms related to assumptions about use of reports and agendas in work groups. Minority members attached the meaning of formality to the use of reports and agendas that signified superiority, a separateness between minority and non-minority work group members. Due to this barrier, individual learning for these members was fragile. They felt power was controlled by the Caucasian membership, and at the start felt like "tokens". What changed was that by pooling their resources in lieu of "quitting the group", they recognized the need to educate the Caucasian members. The African American member had previous experience as a "champion", and provided mentoring and support to the Latino member. The group facilitator encouraged and supported both minority members in the work group, but was at times, disempowering by limiting their input. The minority members mentored each other and became transformed from passive members to "learners" and "educators" regarding communications across the region, and provided insights to the membership regarding the mission of the work group to serve the at-risk diabetic population. At the end of the six months they were changed both personally and professionally as they educated and supported the work group to refocus their priorities to fulfill the mission of service to the underserved diabetic population, and assumed an elevated power status in the work group.

Implications

Brooks' (1994) research described the distribution of formal power as a critical lever in the successful production of knowledge by teams. Her research addressed the notion that formal power assigned by organizations either supports or excludes employees from carrying out the reflective or active work of team learning. In clear contrast to Brooks, this study examined power relationships within the group itself and suggested that the power relationships are fluid and more complex than suggested by Brooks. Flexibility of individual power levels within the work group was not exclusively dependent on the power of the organizational origin nor on individual's power in that organization. There was a relationship between the definition of expert knowledge and work group priorities, the role of "educator" and "learner" and as such the power shifted as the priorities and roles shifted. In addition, movement to a higher power position occurred was through sponsorship by a high power member. This sponsorship facilitated individual members to "accrue" power from a low to medium status and thus "validated" their expertise. Race was an issue of power between the Caucasian, African American and Latino members. Minority work group members were at-risk for learning in a work group setting due to cultural and language differences, and their focus on protecting service to their "communities" while the majority members assumed active work roles. The use of mentoring was important to salvage their role as "learners" and "educators" in the work group and to strengthen their position of assuming active work roles and securing a higher power status. Although learning in cross boundary work groups is problematic, the flexible nature of power relations within a work group with diverse membership and competitive organizational histories can result in significant transformational learning that can change members' personal lives, their role as professionals, and their contributions as team members.

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Shaping Self-Disciplined Workers: A Study of Silent Power in HRD

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Abstract: The intent of this case study was to examine power theories in a singular HRD context in such a way that problematizes the consequences of power.

Purpose and Rationale: Looking at a specific set of circumstances in a detailed fashion is one way to attempt to understand how theory relates to everyday life. Studying a situation in the framework of theories of power and from a critical pedagogical perspective is, in addition, an opportunity to explore issues involved in the benefits and purposes of education. As with most forms of education, the existence and consequences of power are seldom analyzed or even acknowledged by Human Resource Development (HRD) professionals. This study examined the many forms of power converging around the specific HRD functions of training and development thus allowing the researchers an opportunity to explore and expose the existence and ramifications of power. Due to length constraints we chose to highlight the case, leaving deeper theoretical discussions for the presentation.

Theoretical Framework: Theoretically, the issue of social control in corporations, institutions, and bureaucracies is necessary to understand the power and control inherent in HRD training programs. Control is viewed as functions or processes that help to align individual/employee actions with the interests of the employing organization. This control is often accomplished through bureaucratic mechanisms, Human Resource Management (HRM) in particular, where employees are selected, appraised and trained. Organizations lay claim not just to physical or bodily motions and intellectual contributions, but also to emotions and behavior (Clegg, 1979; Hardy & Clegg, 1996; Mumby, 1988).

Individual power relations are, as Clegg (1979) explained, "only the visible tip of a structure of control, hegemony, rule and domination which maintains its effectiveness not so much through overt action, as through its ability to appear to be the natural convention. It is only when control slips, assumptions fail, routines lapse and 'problems' appear that the overt exercise of power is necessary. And that is exerted in an attempt to reassert control" (p. 147). This is why organizations endorse allegedly democratic practices such as shared decision making and participatory management. Participatory management from this neo-Marxist perspective is geared toward changing the surface structure of power schemes between management and labor while the underlying structure remains intact. A secondary theoretical standpoint revolves around Foucault's (1979) notion of a "technology of the self"--a means by which people create a self in order to master it. This mastery then becomes regulatory via self-control. In complementary fashion, discourses of institutions and of HRD see themselves as neutral, immune, and disconnected from power. However, educational sites including the workplace are regulated through discursive practices. In this way, educational practice in the form of training and development substantiates, certifies and makes concrete this normalization.

Research Design: The case of Stewart and his organization stands alone as an "event" which tells a story and is also a way to test theories and create knowledge about specific issues. By "story" we mean creating a narrative profile that stems from feminists' concern that researchers address the reader directly and thereby forge a connection to the people being studies (Stake, 1994). Stake (1994) viewed the outcomes of examining a specific case or set of circumstances as having intrinsic, instrumental and/or collective value. He referred to these two outcomes as intrinsic and instrumental. Case studies typically explore one or more dominating questions and their formats give writers and researchers the opportunity to connect complex life situations to theoretical positions. In joining academic and theoretical issues with complex situations existing in practice, case studies can link the abstract with the concrete experience. In other words, we can learn about power and power theory from studying a single case, involving Stewart and the situation he found himself in within his organization. The following narrative provides an opportunity to define elements of different sources of power in the workplace and shows how they were used and deployed. Data were gathered through interviews, document analysis, and participant observation. Data were coded and themes identified by the researchers with subsequent member checking.

The Case of Stewart: Stewart had worked for eight years as a networking and micro-computer specialist in a department of about 60 people. Stewart had sole responsibility for maintaining the hardware and networking software for this large group, participated in several inter-departmental and organization-wide committees, and was a Total Quality Management (TQM) team facilitator. One of his TQM teams had been charged with making recommendations for staff recognition and rewards. The department had high visibility dealing daily with its customers on very complicated issues and procedures. The perception outside the organization was that customer service was not the best it could be. Many workers within the department felt it was a high-stress environment with serious morale problems, hence the team addressing recognition and rewards. In addition to his role as team leader and technology expert, Stewart often voiced his own concerns to his supervisor and his directors about the problems faced by the department. He also passed along general comments made by other staff who frequently confided in him. Stewart did have some personal discord with office leadership along with the problems he perceived to be common across the department. Over the years he had been promised, among other things, a new office, a leadership role, promotion opportunities, and salary increases. These items not only failed to materialize but many of the changes in the office that did occur were in direct conflict with the recommendations of Stewart's recognition and rewards TQM team. Consequently, although he enjoyed his work, Stewart and many of his co-workers believed office processes exhibited little of the democratic and participatory characteristics that were openly espoused at staff meetings and through the rhetoric of departmental leadership.

As part of ongoing staff development activities, departmental staff were asked to attend a customer service workshop arranged through the organization's HRD group. The training was designed specifically for the department. The only outsider present was the instructor. Early in the training session, Stewart asked the instructor to clarify the specific purpose of the program because the impression he and other staff members had was that it would be a "hands on" workshop about customer service. Instead, the training was geared toward changing the climate of existing workplaces. During the program a video was shown that addressed, among other things, questions of trust among staff, leadership, and management, exposing for analysis the idea that in many organizations employee trust of management and leadership could be an issue. The instructor asked the participants to outline what they felt were important points in the video segment and no one responded. Eventually Stewart pointed out that his notes indicated one of the basic issues raised by the video was trust, and that because of his previous interactions with departmental leadership he understood why trust was included as a topic. He then matter-of-factly stated that he personally was unable to trust departmental management. Stewart then moved on to other items on his outline.

A few days after the workshop, Stewart was called into his supervisor's office and given a memo titled "Behavioral Turnaround." In the memo, and in the meeting with his supervisor, Stewart was told that his behavior had been atrocious and had incited others to be negative. He was told to immediately get rid of his negative attitude, interact positively with all staff members, and openly support office leadership. In addition, Stewart was no longer extended the "trusted privilege" of participating in external endeavors where positive representation of the department was paramount. He was told it was unacceptable in a public group to make the kind of statement he had made and that his comments were completely out of line and served no constructive purpose. Finally, the memo stated that behaviors and attitudes exhibiting anything less than talking positively about and to management and providing "cheerleading" in support of management would result in termination proceedings. Stewart asked his supervisor to clarify the standards of performance to which he was required to adhere but failed to obtain specifics. Stewart then asked what measures would be used to evaluate his performance - or non-performance - and the response was that his supervisor "would know."

Stewart immediately called the HRD instructor to apologize for his "atrocious behavior." The instructor, however, was unable to identify which of the participants in the workshop he was, indicating that he could not recall or distinguish Stewart from other participants. The instructor did remember that during the session several individuals had expressed concerns and frustrations with their work environment. Stewart then reviewed his copy of HRM Policies and Procedures and determined that he could file a grievance based on the way the situation had been handled and the ambiguous criteria contained in the document. After filing a grievance, the "Behavioral Turnaround" memo was torn up.

Several days later, Stewart was again called into a meeting with his supervisor and the director of the department. This time he was presented with another memo describing his negative and generally unsupportive attitude. This memo discussed his failure to project a positive image within the department and delineated standards of performance, stating that correcting his behavior was his responsibility. The points made in the earlier memo were reiterated. Also, the second memo prescribed attendance at the next available HRD course on Inter-group Relations and Assertiveness. Stewart was given six months to change his behavior or the termination process would be finalized.

Analysis: Many forms of power converged around the specific HRD functions of training and development allowing an opportunity to expose and explore their ramifications. This situation developed out of an HRD program. One of the outcomes was required attendance at an additional HRD course. The training spoke strongly to the idea of organizational forms of ideological, hegemonic and discursive powers, essentially silent kinds of power, shaping self-disciplined workers who control not only minds and bodies, but also their hearts and souls. The incident resulted in coercive and disciplinary powers, "louder" forms of power, being invoked by management through HRM and HRD.

The case of Stewart makes explicit bureaucratic means of control and ideologies of management because these mechanisms were deployed when departmental leadership was crippled by "quiet" forms of institutional power relations gone awry. When psychological self-monitoring power fails, other kinds of power may be activated (Fiske, 1993). In an intimidating manner, the department used HRD, and then HRM processes and procedures to re-apply rigorous and aggressive control measures not dependent upon quieter hegemonic forms such as loyalty and self-discipline. The department decided to institute these measures in order to recover its prior organizational reality which up until that point had sustained particular political objectives and secured specific employee identities. One intent of the HRD courses offered to Stewart and his department was to constitute the subject by inculcating staff with appropriate rules, habits and clear ideas of expected norms. Through workplace education this inculcation could occur with various degrees of individual engagement and participation. However, for Stewart the status of the individual and the human right to express individuality, to have agency, and all that constitutes agency was erased as part of these re-application processes. Although it was risky for management to reveal its power in this way, it was done in order to publicly show that unity of departmental leadership and departmental employees was in everyone's best interests.

When the department failed to quietly and properly inculcate organizational norms and values into Stewart, it resorted to intimidation through disciplinary and coercive power. In spite of the "empowering efforts" of HRD programs and management ideology "many employees feel not empowered, but intimidated. Fear is the bluntest of management tools" (For now, p. 13). Similar to Foucault's notion of the Panopticon as a symbol of surveillance, Stewart needed to behave as though he were being watched at all times. Threatened with dismissal Stewart was required to submit himself for "correction" through more training and development. Stewart's reaction to this type of power had been minimal resistance rather than violence or the debilitating effects of despair and apathy which often stem from what Fiske (1993) called "imperializing gone too far" (p. 142). In Stewart's small acts of resistance he was attempting to create a "locale," a bottom-up localizing power contesting management's "stationed" imperializing power. Usually management and institutional leadership, with the help of training and development, effectively marginalized resistant and oppositional knowledge. In this case, Stewart's management, through HRD and HRM policies and procedures, effectively stopped him from producing a locale by positioning him in their workplace system of relations. Stewart became the unnormalized "other" who now lived under constant monitoring and threat and who needed to be resocialized before being reinserted into the system of norms. In Stewart's case he was not the typical stationed body, but rather a stationed heart and soul whose ill-managed emotions had to be more finely tuned. And in Stewart's situation, even though severe punishment was involved, the department also adhered to the "principle of correct training rather than that of vengeful punishment" (Fiske, 1993, p.73) by requiring even more training and development.

Stewart's situation paralleled Hochschild's (1983) research on the "managed heart" where organizational forms of power resulted in not just expectations of physical and mental work, but also of "emotional labor." This sort of labor, demanding a coordination of mind and feeling, "draws on a source of self that we honor as deep and integral to our individuality" (p. 7). Stewart was expected and in fact was forced to accept leadership's statements and directions without question and without comment. Any disagreement had to be suppressed with predefined behavior in evidence at all times. The boundaries of control were enlarged so that heart and spirit were involved in an obvious and public form. Stewart's values were to be *inculcated* in order that body and soul could be viewed as departmental commodities existing as means to reach instrumental institutional missions and goals.

Similar to the fake smiles and accommodating demeanor of many customer service employees, Stewart's feelings and expressions were outlined and monitored by his supervisor. This commanding of feelings and emotions was a blatant example of controlling culture through asking for and actually enforcing a theatric performance. Power of this kind obviously stifles creativity and energy, turning enthusiastic and sincere employees into malleable robots. In contrast to creating an atmosphere of productivity, quality, and teamwork, it may actually endanger the performance of an organization by silencing employee critique, recommendations, or comments about institutional issues and problems. Mumby succinctly described how ideological power plays out when he said "power operates ideologically when it is used to impose a certain form of organizational rationality on members, while simultaneously restricting the articulation of contradictory or competing rationales" (1988, p. 51).

Conclusion: The story of Stewart presented the opportunity to focus attention on the role of HRD as a source of power and control not only of mind and body, but of heart and soul as well. Not surprisingly, because of education's overall lack of power analyses the instructor in Stewart's first class found the outcomes to be rare and unusual. What was even more rare and unusual, however, was the nearly complete exposure of many aspects of power and power differentials. What often happens in corporate training is participants are silenced, sometimes out of an instinct for job and self-preservation and sometimes by already being socialized according to the institution's ideology, discourse, and hegemony. The HRD training received by Stewart and his co-workers presented and supported the organization and managerial points of view - in this case the goal was to adjust and alter the work environment of Stewart's department. When Stewart did not articulate the corporate ideology in the first HRD class, his supervisors took the actions they felt were necessary to avoid further damage to the people and structures around him. Part of Stewart's "punishment" was to be returned to HRD classes for sessions on assertiveness and inter-group communication. The quieter forms of institutional power having failed, punishment by continuing education exemplified how much management counted on HRD experts and professionals to act as therapists, re-socializing deviant individuals into the objective reality of a symbolic organizational universe. Education, because of its humanistic stance, would benefit from understanding Marshall's observation about power being exercised in a search of controllable and governable people. Marshall wrote "if it is more humane, it is more subtle; if it is less overt and involves less violence to bring power into play, it may be more dangerous because of its insidious silence" (Marshall, 1989, p. 109). In other words, what appears to be relatively safe and peaceful as long as conformance and compliance or even silence are in evidence changes in the presence of vocal resistance. At that point, and Stewart's situation was a good example, acquiescence can be commanded.

Institutions depend on emotional control and the socializing effects of myths and symbols to inscribe organizational identification. This in turn facilitates decision making because only one decision or a range of decisions is rational and consistent with corporate ideology. In its espousal of departmental values and ideals, the organization had no tolerance for employees going outside the boundaries by questioning its ideology. In their response, departmental management reacted in a totalitarian manner very much in tune with Peters and Waterman's (1982) exhortation to "buy in or get out." Giddens' (1981) analysis of human agency is helpful here. He referred to a "dialectic of control" which offered some form of choice through the interaction of power and agency. However, an agent such as Stewart, who could have no opinions whatsoever was "no longer an agent" (p. 63). The erasure of his human agency canceled any possibility of the transformative effects of education and of creating an organization that was both democratic and productive (Kincheloe, 1995).

HRD runs the "company school," a creation similar to other central knowledge and power systems such as the military and public schools (Fiske, 1993). Given Stewart's experience it is clear that HRD professionals need to ask why the institutions within which they work and make their living offer courses with objectives such as identifying and reducing resistance to change, developing strategies for coping with change, using productivity standards to emphasize strong employee skills in self-management, presenting a professional and authoritative image, defining behaviors that enhance personal presence, elevating the concept of work to the higher plane of service, integrating habits of personal effectiveness and expectations, adapting to customer needs, becoming exceptional, avoiding burnout, and motivating and empowering employees for success. Some of the salient questions for HRD to consider are who really benefits from attendance at these courses? What are the multiple purposes of training? Who is making progress? Why is productivity important? And what are all the possible consequences, good and bad, of training and development?

HRD professionals would benefit from an understanding of critical pedagogy because training and development venues are cultural spaces where agency and subjectivity are produced. In education, and in a democratic workplace, learners and workers are aware of how they negotiate agency in terms of the official company line and the dialectic of empowerment and domination. Power, when related to cultural and political authority (including training), grounds and defines what people "see" as logical, objective, and rational. Power and expertise also determine what schools and the workplace euphemistically label a good or cooperative attitude. "For the workplace to be genuinely democratized, it must demand an arrangement that guarantees workers' voices will be heard and that shields them from the capricious exercise of management prerogative. If this is not the case, employees will not possess the freedom to speak their minds for fear of reprisal" (Kincheloe, 1995, p. 67).

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The Shifting Development Paradigm from Modernization to Decentralization: What are the implications for Adult Education?

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Abstract: This research explored emerging patterns of providership for nonformal education programs in Ghana, Senegal, and Burkina Faso where each country is in various stages of decentralization and democratization. The study found that, increasingly, multiple actors are responsible for nonformal education activities and that, unfortunately, though this could raise the profile of adult education it actually may further obscure its role.

Introduction

From the 1960s to the present, international development work has shifted its emphasis from an emphasis on modernization to a focus on activities which build on the decentralization of governments. The background and theoretical framework which follow trace this evolution and provide context for our research in West Africa.

Background and Theoretical Framework. During the 1960s, the dominant development paradigm globally was state-centered modernization characterized by national planning and high bureaucratization. This was a period of nation building throughout much of Africa. Government-sponsored nonformal education (NFE) was prevalent but typically housed in ministries of education, which overlaid it with bureaucracy, and formal schooling approaches. During the late 1970s through the 1980s, economic structural adjustment programs designed to ultimately improve economic conditions in Third World countries called for increased domestic savings and improved public-sector efficiency and resource allocation. Results included drastic cut backs on public sector employment and social services such as health, education, and welfare programs (Buvinic, M. & Yudelman, S., 1989). The gaps created by the rolling back of services previously provided by the state were filled by nongovernmental organizations focusing on community development style projects in small villages and outlying rural areas. Thus, nonformal education though clearly still occurring did not receive the visibility it received in the 1960s. In the 1980s, formal schooling was more heavily emphasized in Africa and globally education in general was viewed as less integral to economic development and social change (LaBelle and Ward, 1996).

In the 1990s, two forces influenced the re-emergence of NFE in West Africa: 1) a continued decline of resources on the states' part resulting from economic structural adjustment programs' deregulation and liberalization of economies culminating in state stagnation and 2) the winds of a democratization movement which have swept through much of Africa. In the current development paradigm of decentralization, the private-for-profit sector, civic associations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are viewed as well placed to act as the nuclei for national development efforts (Esman, 1991).

Nonformal education remains an important part of the development equation. The problems it sought to alleviate have not receded they have intensified. Budgetary constraints have further eroded the effectiveness of formal education and put it beyond the reach of an ever increasing number of people, especially the rural poor. Decentralization of the development responsibility to civic groups and local institutions heightens demand for skills that can best be provided through nonformal education.

Given this backdrop of international development and nonformal education we chose to explore the current provision of nonformal education in a context of democratization and decentralization.

Methodology

Our research was guided by the following research questions: Who are the current providers of nonformal education in Ghana, Senegal, and Burkina Faso and what roles are they playing? Are there current and emerging patterns of collaboration among the various public and private sector actors involved in the provision of nonformal education in these West African countries? Is the form of NFE process or functional?

The nature of the research--a collaborative effort between a research team at Florida State University and West African field research partners in the three countries--was exploratory and the project was designed as a series of case studies. The U.S. team initially designed an instrument for organizing data that laid out theoretical roles required in the provision of NFE; the instrument was revised based upon critique from each of our partners. Each partner was given fairly broad guidelines regarding the research purpose (exploration of patterns of NFE provision) and was requested to conduct unstructured interviews. Snowballing was used by our field researchers to uncover a variety of providers and innovative provider partnerships. Analytic induction (Goetz & LeCompte, 1981) was used to identify working typologies and hypotheses. Our methodological rationale was to achieve an emic posture in the project.

Service Provision, Patterns of Collaboration and Forms of NFE

NFE projects which require the integration of learning with provision of public services necessitate that multiple organizational roles be taken on. These types of projects are not only a matter of teaching/training but of providing the public service in question, administering, creating policy, financing, learning, and evaluating. When modernization was the guiding principle in development, the rule of thumb was that governments set policy and NGOs were relied upon to implement (Comings, 1996). Now government continues in the role of policy making but increasingly the state recognizes the expertise some NGOs can bring to bear and, on their side, NGOs recognize the necessity for not only advocating policy change but designing policy as well. Resulting from this interweaving of roles within public service provision we find that NFE provision is then embedded in these projects. So when we speak of NFE providership we are naming those enterprises that are conceived as ultimately responsible for providing the public service in question.

Providership Roles. In Ghana, specifically, the Presbyterian Church seemed unique as a service provider because of its entrenchment in Ghana's primary health care system and because it was at the top of the hierarchical chain of administrative advisement on matters of major health education activities and programs. Otherwise, in Ghana, service provision was spread in equal measure across the state, NGOs, beneficiaries, and donors. In Ghana, private-for-profits were most visible in the teaching role (three out of five projects). Because the Sankofa project had a train-the-trainer component, private-for-profits (PFPs) and beneficiaries were both "teachers." It was only in the primary health care sector that the state was responsible for continuing education courses. In the Family Life Education project Planned Parenthood was responsible for instruction.

In the two francophone countries (Senegal and Burkina Faso), providership was evenly split between the state and NGOs (each providing services in three out of six projects). In Ghana, the state was still funding most of the NFE activity while in Senegal and Burkina Faso funding was primarily from donors (e.g. French, Swiss, Germans, Austrians) and international NGOs (e.g. Bread for the World, Brothers of Man, Club 2/3). In Senegal and Burkina, teaching fell predominantly to NGOs and consultants[1].

Patterns of Collaboration. Collaboration was conceived as a network or web of multiple actors much as Esman (1991) had projected the provision of public services in the developing world. However, across the range of NFE projects observed we found varying levels of interaction among these actors based on levels of intensity with regard to intended time frame for the relationship, and structure of the relationship (Winer, 1994). To demonstrate these criteria, we can contrast two projects: the Training of Young Farmers (TYF) in Burkina Faso, and the Community Ownership and Management of Water Project (COMWP) in Ghana. TYF although it evidences multiple actors such as the Ministry of Agriculture, the state-run literacy program, and an inter-African NGO[2] and the time frame for the relationship appears to be on-going, the structure is not new. Most organizational roles required to mount an NFE activity are held by the state. The NGO implements the program, beneficiaries are responsible for training but all other responsibilities e.g. financing, material/technical support, mobilizing participants fall to the state. In contrast, let us examine the COMWP. Ghana has devolved responsibility for rural water delivery to the residents via the National Strategy and Policy for Community Water and Sanitation Programs. The policy establishes a new structure and durable relationship between the state and the beneficiaries. New village level organizations (WATSAN Committees) are established. These committees now supply materials and technical expertise, providing the actual water service, and co-financing along with the state. Private-for-profits provided training. The state's role is minimal and will decline as the WATSAN Committees are trained and more able to take on full implementation.

There are several points worth mentioning here, first, most projects were arranged more on the order of webs of providers with various actors performing different roles--for the most part NGOs provided instruction, material/technical resources, and mobilized participants which is much as it has been. The state served in a greater variety of roles in Ghana than in Senegal and Burkina Faso where NGOs appeared more prominently in provider roles[3]. Only two projects could be said to have met the criteria of true collaborations: the rural water program in Ghana and the "bottom-up" Literacy Program in Burkina Faso. The COMWP has been described; the structure of the Burkina literacy program was established by the beneficiaries. It was a program started by some literate farmers in 1989 in three provinces of eastern Burkina Faso. The state provides texts paid for by the grassroots NGO--L'Association de TINTUA[4]. Beneficiaries construct the centers and through increasing levels of literacy attainment become the instructors.

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[1] Consultants were considered differently than private-for-profits. PFPs were enterprises in the business of training and human resource development.

[2] L'Inades/Formation headquartered in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

[3] These roles include: mobilization, provision of material/technical resources, financing, teaching, policy creation or advocacy, and program evaluation.

Process versus Functional Forms of Nonformal Education. Only two parties involved in the observed nonformal education projects could be classified as process-oriented. Both were nongovernmental organizations. One was international--SNV, a Danish NGO--and the other was indigenous interAfrican--L'Inades/Formation. In both these NGOs, means were stressed as much as ends; furthermore, their activities focused more heavily on developing capacity for self-determination through increased levels of beneficiary autonomy in decision-making. The remainder of the projects were functional in that their activities were tied directly to providing skills for agriculture or water provision, for example.

Findings

Many of the services which we tend to think of as public services--water distribution, literacy, primary health care, vocational preparation--in our sample were provided not by the state alone but by networks of actors inclusive of NGOs, beneficiaries, the church, and private-for-profits. Decentralization efforts in all three countries, whether de facto or purposeful, seem to have given rise to increased nonformal education activity. In some cases, e.g. Ghana, training was an afterthought as was stated in the *WATSANNEWS*: "The project had to develop training programs not specified in the project document but judged to be necessary from the experience of project implementation" (1995, p. 14). In Ghana, private-for-profits (PFPs) were more prominent. In Senegal and Burkina Faso, we found NGOs at the forefront of NFE projects as we had anticipated. Also of note were the number of *indigenous* and *pan-African* NGOs represented in all three countries. Ghanaian PFPs appear to be dynamic in the role of instructional planning and delivery in Ghana and perhaps foreshadow a major shift to privatization and entrepreneurship in the NFE sector there. For example, EMPRETEC is a Ghanaian PFP entirely devoted to training entrepreneurs. We found beneficiaries not only involved as learners but also as financiers and as mobilizers; however, they were surprisingly seldom involved in program evaluation. Furthermore, we found only a moderate level of overall program monitoring by any of the entities involved. We found very few instances of actors other than beneficiaries in the role of learner; interestingly, ~~though~~ these instances were not limited to process-oriented NGO projects. The COMWP in Ghana was one of those in which the state agents participated as learners. Finally, we observed that ministries of agriculture, labor, and health were more prevalent in partnered programs than ministries of education.

Implications

Programmatic Implications. If collaborative provision of NFE is a trend, what is the role of adult educators? When public service provision is linked so closely with and is so reliant upon NFE program development and implementation but these functions are divided among several parties, who has the ultimate responsibility to ensure that all programmatic functions are addressed? For example, in our study beneficiaries were not found represented in the evaluation of programs which is an important component of capacity-building. Also, the paucity of process-oriented NFE programs is troubling especially in this critical era of government decentralization. Civic responsibilities increasingly delegated to the citizenry rely on an informed and capable public which are the types of capacities that process-oriented programs seek to develop.

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[4] In Gulmacema this means "we develop ourselves."

The isolation of the Ministry of Education from a number of the projects in our study is symptomatic of two problems. The first is the divide between the development community at large and the educational system,[5] and the second is the territoriality of government ministries (Coles, 1988). The former problem speaks to the need for African educators (both AE and non-AE) and development specialists to come together around mutual concerns, to begin to appreciate how the alleviation of poverty is linked to learning and educational interests. The latter concern regarding the obstacles in structuring departments of NFE so that they reflect its true interdisciplinary nature has been at issue within the IIEP for years (1983). It appears that no suitable arrangement or framework for the effective incorporation of NFE has been found. In most configurations, the shortcomings continue to be a lack of program coherence a lack of a relationship with the formal system.

Policy Implications. The emergence of indigenous private-for-profits in the NFE arena, on the one-hand, hold immense potential for sustaining NFE programs initiated in multiple sectors--i.e. indigenous PFPs are local and know the context well. But at the policy level private-for-profit interests are to an extent self-serving when compared to the interests of nonprofit organizations (NGOs) that have tended to stress macro-policy reform (formal policy changes) for social change. However, the policy interests of NGOs have been sector specific--e.g. agriculture, water, human rights, health care. The overall interests in policy structures to support nonformal education have been neglected. Whether private-for-profits will take up NFE policy issues will depend on the extent to which they conceptualize their work as requiring policy supports. If PFPs do not recognize themselves as part and parcel of the loosely organized field of nonformal education then the likelihood is poor.

In 1997, Giere noted that Africa as a whole was spending less than one per cent of its education budget on adult education (p. 29). At the same time she also queries how a seamless system of adult education can be created and how quality in AE can be assured? She, as do others, cites the increasing influence of civil society (much as we have seen in West Africa) on the provision of NFE in developing countries. However, the presence of multiple actors in the NFE arena taxes even further evolving policy making systems such as those found in West African countries. These are policy makers who have moved from authoritarian approaches (in the case of Ghana specifically) to decentralization of services within the short span of twenty years. Moreover, given the structural obstacles faced by nonformal education within governments, as outlined above, one returns to the question: Who will advocate for nonformal education in its highest and best use as an interdisciplinary activity that can promote social change?

The increased involvement of indigenous NGOs situates them well to support the extensive number of micro-policy changes (Korten, 1987) which encompass revised institutional roles and relationships necessary to accommodate the current decentralization activities in West

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[5] This divide has been referred to as the "great divorce" in the PADLOS-Education Study (Easton, P., 1997. Decentralization and local capacity-building in West Africa: Conclusions of the PADLOS-Education Study. Paris:OECD/Club du Sahel.

Africa. However, given the lack of NGO centralization in many of these countries how will micro-policy become a consistent part of their agenda?

Implications for the Future of Adult Education. In America, adult education oriented towards social action has been overtaken by market-driven human resource development activities. Does the increase of private-for-profit adult education providers point toward a similar trend in Ghana? One can only survey the factors that seem to contribute to such a phenomenon. The continued emphasis on private sectorization and market-driven approaches in the developing world will play a major role in the outcome as will opposing forces of process-driven NFE organizations that center their efforts on individual and community self-determination.

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The Relationship of Learning Strategy Preference and Personality Type

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Abstract: This study investigated the relationship of learning strategy preference to personality type. The findings indicate that while overall personality type is not related to learning strategy preference, three of the four indicators of personality type show a relationship to learning strategy preference.

Introduction

Both practitioners and researchers have sought for decades to determine effective ways to identify individual differences among learners. This has led to explorations in the area of learning styles and more recently in the realm of learning strategies. While "learning styles are cognitive, affective, and physiological traits that serve as relatively stable indicators of how learners perceive, interact with, and respond to the learning environment" (Keefe, 1982, p. 44), learning strategies are the techniques or skills that an individual elects to use in order to accomplish a specific learning task (Fellenz & Conti, 1989). Such strategies vary by individual and by learning objective. Often they are so customary to learners that they are given little thought; at other times much deliberation occurs before a learning strategy is selected for a specific learning task.

Learning strategy research has revealed that adult learners have a distinct preference for the types of learning strategies that they tend to use when approaching a learning task in daily life. Most of the learning strategy research with adults in formal and informal learning situations has been conducted with the Self-Knowledge Inventory of Lifelong Learning Strategies (SKILLS). This instrument conceptualizes learning strategies as being composed of the areas of metacognition, metamotivation, memory, critical thinking, and resource management (Conti & Fellenz, 1991). Research from 15 studies using SKILLS consistently found that adults do not differ in their learning strategy use based on demographic variables but that they do form distinct groups based upon their pattern of learning strategy use. Using the SKILLS database of 3,070 adults from diverse backgrounds, the Assessing The Learning Strategies of AdultS (ATLAS) instrument was developed and validated to quickly identify the learning preference group of adults (Conti & Kolody, 1998a).

ATLAS is a user-friendly instrument that uses multi-colored cards in a flow-chart format to identify learning strategy preference in approximately 2 minutes. With this self-report instrument, respondents are quickly placed into one of three groups: Navigators, Problem Solvers, or Engagers. Navigators are focused learners who prefer a well-planned, structured learning environment complete with feedback that allows them to monitor their progress and remain on course. Problem Solvers are learners who rely heavily on the critical thinking strategies of generating alternatives, testing assumptions, and practicing conditional acceptance. Problem solvers prefer a learning environment that promotes creativity, trial and error, and hands-on experimentation. Engagers are passionate learners who operate from the affective domain with a love for learning and who learn best when actively engaged in the learning in a meaningful manner. Personal growth, increase in self-esteem, helping others, and working as part of a team for a worthwhile project are emotionally rewarding to Engagers and will motivate them to embark upon and to sustain a learning experience (Kolody, 1997, p. 117).

Because participants in each of the learning strategies preference groups seemingly share common characteristics, do they also share certain personality traits that can help to predict, describe, and understand the learners in each of the groups? Personality style or type is a widely accepted concept among educators (Noring, 1993). This concept is based upon Jung's writing on personality and has been popularized by the availability of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The essence of the theory underpinning the MBTI is that much behavior which seems random is actually very orderly and consistent due to the basic differences in the way people prefer to use their perception and judgment (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, p. 1). "Perception involves all the ways of becoming aware of things, people, happenings, or ideas. Judgment involves all the ways of coming to conclusions about what has been perceived" (p. 1). Is there a relationship between perception, judgment, and learning strategy preference?

The MBTI, which was developed in the 1940's and has been continually updated, contains four separate indices concerning what people attend to in a given situation and how they draw conclusions about what they perceive (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, p. 2). These orthogonal scales measure (a) how a person is energized, (b) what a person pays attention to, (c) how a person decides, and (d) what lifestyle a person prefers (Noring, 1993). Extensive research has been done over the years to establish and confirm the validity and reliability of the MBTI and to keep it current with changing social conditions (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, Chapter 9).

Purpose and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to measure the relationship between learning strategy preferences and indicators of personality type. Learning strategy preference was determined with ATLAS, and personality type was measured with continuous scores on the MBTI. In this casual-comparative study, the research questions directing the research were (a) what is the relationship of learning strategy preference to overall personality type and (b) what is the relationship of learning strategy preference to the four indices constituting personality type.

Data were collected from 553 volunteers in Alberta, Canada, and in the states of Montana, Nebraska, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas. This group was composed of Adult Basic Education teachers, public school teachers, professionals who teach adults in various agencies, adult students returning to a nontraditional college credit program, fire fighters, students in continuing education classes, community college students, and college students.

Respondents provided information concerning their age, gender, ethnicity, and educational level and then completed both the ATLAS and MBTI. The sample consisted of 32! females (58.2%) and 231 males (41.8%). The average age of the group was 30.8 with a range from 18 to 90. The ethnic make-up of the group was as follows: White--83.9%, Native American--6%, African American--4.9%, Hispanic--4.2%, and Other--1%. The educational level of the respondents varied as follows: Less than a high school diploma--.7%, high school diploma--37%, vocational or educational certificate--11.5%, associates degree--24%, bachelors degree--13.9%, and graduate degree--13.8%. The respondents were distributed across the three learning strategy preference groups as follows: Navigators--199 (36%), Problem Solvers--142 (25.7%), and Engagers--212 (38.3%).

Findings

"The MBTI contains four separate indices...Each index reflects one of four basic preferences which, under Jung's theory, direct the use of perception and judgment" (Myers & McCaully, 1985, p. 2). The Extraversion-Introversion (EI) index measures attitudes concerning whether to direct perception judgement mainly on the outer world or on the inner world of ideas. The Sensing-Intuition (SN) index focuses on the process of perceptions as being either depending on observable facts which can be ascertained by the five senses or on intuition which may be determined beyond the conscious mind. The Thinking-Feeling (TF) index reflects a person's processes of judgement as relying primarily on thinking to decide impersonally through logical thought or as relying on feeling to decide on the basis of personal or social values. The Judgement-Perception (JP) index describes a person's style of dealing with the outside world either by using a judgement process involving thinking or feeling or by using a perceptive process involving either sensing or intuition. "The preference on each index is independent of preferences for the other three indices, so that the four indices yield sixteen possible combinations called 'types'" (p. 2).

Since personality type has been conceptualized as the interaction of the 4 scales on the MBTI which produces 16 different personality types, the data were first analyzed using discriminant analyses (Conti, 1993; Klecka, 1980) to determine the relationship between learning style preferences and personality type. With this multivariant procedure, the respondents were divided into three groups based on their ATLAS scores, and the interaction of the four MBTI indices were examined. The results of this discriminant analysis indicated that learning strategy preferences are not meaningfully related to personality types. The discriminant function which was produced in this analysis was only 46.1% accurate in placing the respondents in their correct learning strategy group; the accuracy for each group was as follows: Navigators--61.3%, Engagers--40.1%, and Problem Solvers--35.8%. Since a random assignment of the responds to groups could expect an accuracy rate of 33.3%, the discriminate function was only a 12.8% improvement over chance. This low accuracy rate was reflected by an eigen value of .14 and a canonical correlation of .35 which indicates that the learning strategy preference groups only accounted for 12.3% of the variance in the analysis. Because of the lack of accuracy in the classification ability of the discriminant function and because of the low amount of variance accounted for by the process, this function, which was based on personality indices, was judged as not being useful for discriminating between the three learning strategy preference groups.

Although a person's overall personality type is not related to learning strategy preferences, three of the four personality indices do have a significant relationship with learning strategy preferences. Using continuous scores which are a linear transformation of the respondent's preference scores (Myers & McCaully, 1985, pp. 9-10), one-way analysis of variance indicated that the SN (F=20.22, df=2/550, p<.0001), TF (F=8.02, df=2/550, p=.0004), and JP (F=34.02, df=2/550, p<.0001) indices are related to learning strategy preferences. The EI index (F=.84, df=2/550, p=.43) showed no significant differences among the groups.

The post hoc comparisons of the three significant analyses using the Tukey test revealed that the learning strategy preference groups associated with each other differently on each index. Scores on the continuous scale for each index can range from 33 to 167. The midpoint for each index is 100. Scores below 100 are associated with the first term in the name of the index while those above 100 are associated with the second term in the name. On the Sensing-Intuition index, the Navigators (81.9) were strong on the Sensing side of the scale while the Problem Solvers (98.1) and the Engagers (95.2) were near the midpoint but also on the Sensing side of the scale. On the Thinking-Feeling index, the Navigators (92.7) and Problem Solvers (94.4) were on the Thinking side of the scale while the Engagers (101.7) were slightly on the Feeling side. The largest differences between the groups were on the Judgment-Perception index. Here the Navigators (85) were strongly on the Judgment side of the scale while the Engagers (105.6) and Problem Solvers (106.7) were on the Perception side of the scale. In all three analyses, the Navigators and Engagers were in different groups. However, the Problem Solvers align with each of these groups on the various scales; on the SN scale, the Problem Solvers are like the Navigators while they are like the Engagers on the TF and JP scales.

As with the past research related to learning strategies (Conti & Kolody, 1998a), the use of learning strategies was not associated with demographic variables. No differences existed among the learning strategy groups on the demographic variables of gender (F=.90, df=2/549, p=.41), age (F=.61, df=2/527, p=.54), or level of education (F=.55, df=2/546, p=.55).

Discussion

Although the characteristics of the learning strategy preference groups can easily lead one to speculate that certain types of learning patterns can be linked with specific personality types, no significant relationship was found between overall personality type and learning strategy preference; that is, personality type is not a predictor for discriminating among learning strategy preference groups. Thus, stereotypes cannot be made to link approaches to learning with overall personality types. It cannot be assumed that people will have a certain type of personality just because they approach learning in a certain way. Instead, the various personality types can be expected to exist within all three types of learning preference groups.

While the interaction of the various personality type indicators failed to show a relationship to learning strategy preference, three of the four indicators did show an individual relationship to learning strategy preference. While no differences were found on the Extraversion-Introversion scale, the Navigators were more Sensing and more Judging than the Problem Solvers and the Engagers. The Engagers were more Feeling than the Navigators and the Problem Solvers. Thus, those in the various learning strategy preference groups have differing degrees of support for the various personality type indices which is not related to the comprehensive personality types theorized by the MBTI.

However, certain personality traits can be indicators of how one might be approaching learning tasks. The developers of the MBTI argue that overall personality type is a combination of the four indices which makeup the measure. This combination cannot be associated with the learning strategy preference groups because the Problem Solvers share personality traits in common with both the Navigators and the Engagers. Nevertheless, the individual traits that make up this combination can be associated with the groups. Of these, the traits of the Navigators are the strongest. Navigators have the strongest scores on Sensing, Thinking, and Judgement. These all indicate a preference for dealing with concrete items in a realist way. They favor making logical connections, planning operations, and organizing activities; they are not afraid to make a decision and to move toward closure on things (Myers & McCaulley, 1985, pp. 11-14). Engagers tend to rely more heavily than Navigators on subjective feelings and upon adapting incoming information to address immediate realities. The Problem Solvers are similar to the Engagers on Intuition and Perception, but they tend to rely more on making logical connections like the Navigators than on subjective feelings like the Engagers.

Thus, as with any concepts that have the potential of labeling people, care must be taken in how they are used. Learners cannot be labeled in their personality type because of the way they go about the learning process. However, certain traits that are associated with personality can be useful in providing insights about how people learn. Such a knowledge could help learners better understand how they go about the learning process. For the teacher, types of information such as this "can be beneficial to the selection of appropriate methods and techniques when they are used to focus understanding, discussion, and reflective thought about the learner; however, they can be detrimental if they are used to avoid critical thinking about the learners" (Conti & Kolody, 1998b, p. 137). By providing instructors with additional tools for better identifying ways to help adults learn effectively, this knowledge can be an important element in addressing individual differences in the learning process.

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Perspective Transformation Over Time: A Two-year Follow-up Study of HIV-Positive Adults

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Abstract: This study investigated the stability of a perspective transformation over time. The findings confirmed that perspective transformations, at least in our sample, are irreversible; we also discovered that meaning schemes continue to change.

Although Mezirow (1978) first proposed his theory of perspective transformation over twenty years ago, it has only been within the last decade that the field has witnessed a burgeoning of both empirical research and philosophical critique on the theory. In a recent article, for example, Taylor (1997) reviewed some 39 empirical studies using Mezirow's transformative learning as the theoretical framework. The focus of most of these 39 studies was on the process of transformational learning, either in its entirety, or with respect to a particular component of the process. Taylor notes that while there is "much support for Mezirow's theory," there is also a need "to recognize to a greater degree . . . (the) broadening of the definitional outcome of a perspective transformation," (abstract).

It is the outcome of a perspective transformation that most interests us, not in terms of what might be an outcome, but rather what happens to the perspective transformation over time. The purpose of this study was to explore just that question by re-interviewing, two years later, the 18 HIV-positive adults who were participants in our original study of the centrality of meaning-making in transformational learning (Courtenay, Merriam, & Reeves, 1998).

What the Literature Suggests

With regard to the stability of a perspective transformation, Mezirow (1991) is quite clear that once a transformation has taken place, there is no going back to an earlier position: "The transformative learning process is irreversible once completed; that is, once our understanding is clarified and we have committed ourselves fully to taking the action it suggests, we do not regress to levels of less understanding" (p. 152). Kegan (1994) characterizes cognitive development in much the same way. Cognitive development is not merely additive, but "transformative, qualitative, and incorporative. Each successive principle subsumes or encompasses the prior principle . . . The new principle is a higher order principle (more complex, more inclusive) that makes the prior principle into an element or tool of its system" (p. 33). Only one study was found that included a follow-up of participants' perspective transformations. Williams (1986) studied the role of transformational learning in changing the behavior of male spouse abusers. At the end of a 12-week intervention program designed to change the men's perspectives and their behaviors, the degree of perspective transformation was assessed using an evaluation form and an exit interview. He interviewed six of the 19 participants three months later and found that for four of the six, perspective transformation ratings were slightly higher. However, little information was given about the nature of these perspective transformations or how they were measured.

It would seem from the theoretical literature that once one has committed to a transformed perspective, it would not be possible to revert to a less developed state. That is not to say, however, that one has reached an end state; rather, development is a continuous process (Brew, 1993; Daloz, 1986; Kegan, 1994; Mezirow, 1990a, 1991; Tennant, 1993). Further, this development is more than change over time -- it is change in a positive direction, toward a more complex, integrated, inclusive, and tolerant perspective. Indeed, Mezirow (1990a) equates changes in meaning perspectives with stages of moral, ethical, and ego development; "Each stage . . . involves a developmentally advanced and progressively more functional meaning perspective" (p. 359). Daloz concurs, stating that the "later stages are by definition more conceptually inclusive and discriminating, are 'better' in some sense than earlier ones" (p. 137).

Thus, we conducted follow-up interviews to determine if perspective transformations had endured for our original sample. We also wanted to know whether or not our participants had adjusted, modified, or changed particular meaning schemes, and/or accumulated a number of changed meaning schemes such that another perspective transformation has occurred.

Data Collection and Analysis

As in the original study, a qualitative design was deemed most appropriate to discover how participants' perspectives may have changed over time. Of the original 18 participants in our first study, we were able to interview 14 (8 men and 6 women). All respondents, except one 59 year-old male, ranged in age from 25 to 47. Eight of the 14 are Caucasian, five are African American, and one is Hispanic. Level of educational attainment spanned grade 10 to Master's degree. Ten were currently employed and 10 of the 14 reported being on protease inhibitors. Respondents were given $30 to participate in interviews of approximately 90 minutes in length.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews. The focus of the interview questions was to assess what changes had taken place in their perspectives with the passage of time, and with the introduction of protease inhibitors. Interviews were held in January and February of 1998, more than two years after the 1995 interviews. All were tape recorded and transcribed. Data from the transcripts were analyzed inductively using the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Each member of the research team individually read, re-read, and coded the transcripts for key points regarding our questions. The research team met regularly to compare each member's analysis of individual transcripts, and to compare analyses across transcripts. Intensive analysis involved moving between the data and the interpretations within the same transcript and across different transcripts. Eventually a common pattern of responses across the 14 interviews with regard to the stability of perspective transformation and continued meaning-making was identified.

Findings

Two major findings emerged from the data. First, the perspective transformation proved irreversible. People continued to make meaningful contributions, appreciate their lives and the lives of others. Second, there were changes in meaning schemes, which included the adoption of a future-oriented perspective to life, greater attention to issues pertaining to care of the self, and integration of one's HIV-positive status into self-definition.

Irreversibility of the Perspective Transformation

Maintenance of the perspective transformation was evidenced in the three ways described below.

Opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. In the first study, the new perspective was evidenced by the participants' belief that their HIV-positive status served as an opportunity to make a meaningful contribution. Infection with HIV facilitated use of their lives in a purposeful way. Two years ago, Steve, then 39, noted, "I'm real grateful to be here . . . I think there's a reason and I don't really have to know what the reason is. I have a hunch that if there's, you know if anything can come from this to help anybody else, that's reason [enough]."

During the second interviews, it was evident that respondents retained the desire to make a meaningful contribution. Steve, for instance, said he was pleased to "be able to be on this planet and have an impact" whether it meant helping friends or family.

A continued heightened sensitivity to life. When respondents were interviewed two years ago, they expressed gratitude for their lives and evidenced a newfound appreciation for nature and people. Sam, who works as a handyman, described his life as "heavenly" and said, "I feel like I'm on the verge of crying tears of gratitude." Dawn commented on "how fragile life is," and Tracy concluded that she had previously taken life and people for granted.

In the second interviews, the heightened sensitivity to life was shown in participants' continued appreciation for their lives, the lives of others, and nature. For example, Joe spoke of his appreciation for life and his surroundings:

> I walk outside and it's a beautiful day and I sit there and breathe the air and see the sunshine and I have -- there's sometimes when I can actually have tears in my eyes because it's so beautiful, just because I know I get to be alive another day and experience it. And, I just know that I have so many friends now that aren't here to do that. So I have a great appreciation for living.

A continued need to be of service to others. The importance of the participants' relationships with others drove their need to be of service. During the first interviews, most worked for or volunteered at AIDS service organizations (ASOs), and engaged in activities such as peer counseling or educational speaking. Steve's eloquent quote captured his desire to help:

> I just want to hold a candle to where maybe somebody two steps behind me can make it to that point and then perhaps go a couple more steps if I can't go. I just feel like we're all helping each other walk through this.

The strong desire to be of service to others continued to be apparent in the second interviews. Many were still working or volunteering at ASOs, serving in a variety of roles. Pat, diagnosed HIV-positive over 12 years ago, discussed her continued service to others by saying:

> I volunteer for Outreach . . . I sit on a board . . . I'm a patient advocate for [a local AIDS group] . . . I sponsor a lot of women in . . . in recovery that are struggling to stay clean, but the ones that have HIV, you know, I work with their minds and try to keep them on a . . . positive plane about the disease.

Interestingly, it was in discussing their service to others that the participants recognized the irreversibility of their perspective transformation. When Joe rekindled his interest in a comic book collection because he realized that he would continue to live, he recognized how his worldview had changed:

> And it was like, "Oh cool, you know, I'm gonna be around another 20 years to enjoy this maybe." So, uh, I did go through a short time where I was buying things and felt kind of materialistic but it didn't last. You know, it was like, I hadn't forgotten all the lessons I'd learned -- I was kind of indulging in it for a little while, just to get that feeling back I used to have. But I'd changed too much . . . . Ultimately, I realized these are just things. If I'm collecting it to have just number 1 through 20 or something, you know, why am I doing it? It didn't have the same meaning anymore as that, it was one of those unimportant things, ultimately.

Changes in Meaning Schemes

Over time, the participants in this study evidenced changes in their meaning schemes in the following three ways.

Adoption of a future-oriented perspective. When last interviewed, the focus of the participants in this study was on living in the present. Many eloquently spoke of the "uncertainties of tomorrow" and how "living for today" provided the freedom to do what they felt was really important in life. Dawn, for instance, said that she had "watched people all my life around me who 'someday they're gonna do this and someday they're gonna do that' and I try really hard to make my someday today."

In the follow-up interviews, participants spoke of this new perspective in various ways, including having a "positive outlook," "making long-range plans," and "looking forward" to benchmark events in life, such as a 30th birthday or retirement. Nicole, one of the youngest participants in the study, said simply and frankly, "I'm not thinking I'm going to die any time soon." In no longer believing that her life would be cut short by HIV, Tracy stated that she will now "make plans . . . I set goals, things that I would like to do."

The thrill that the hope for a future brings, however, is not without its own trepidation and challenge. Jeffrey was quick to note that the prospect of living is precipitating the "same kind of metamorphosis that I have gone through" in others and that they are "having the same struggles":

> Do I put my energy into living or do I still be safe and keep all the safeguards that I have? Do I go out and get the mortgage or do I just stay . . . These life choices are scary and yet we never thought we'd have to deal with them.

Greater attention to care of the self. During the first round of interviews the participants reported that the meaning they had made of their HIV status centered largely on being of service to others. Although serving others has continued to be a hallmark in the lives of all the participants in this study, data from the second interviews reveal that they evidence an awareness of the need to care for themselves as well -- an awareness rarely articulated two years ago. For some, like Dawn, caring for others had often been in lieu of caring for herself, not in conjunction with it. She explained it like this:

> Over the years, I've had the privilege of meeting . . . tens of thousands of HIV-positive people . . . I started running back into them [laughter] and, you know, they say, "You were such an inspiration" . . . I shamefully stand there and say to myself I haven't done any of those things. "That was good advice. I'm glad you took it." It's time for me to do that too.

Elise likewise observed that in addition to that "blessed feeling of being of service to other people," there "always has to be a part of me that's taking care of me. Otherwise, I'm of no service to anyone else."

Integration of HIV-positive status into self-definition. There was also a notable difference in the centrality of HIV in the lives of the participants in the second interviews. Most, two years earlier, had defined themselves primarily in terms of their HIV status. In the intervening two-year period, however, the prominence of HIV in their lives had receded. Elise, for instance, noted that "I'm more integrated with HIV. It's . . . as opposed to being as big as I am, it's just a part of who I am now." Sam similarly remarked that, "It [HIV] is just a part of me now."

Discussion

Our study provides empirical evidence that perspective transformations are irreversible, confirming the thinking of Mezirow (1991) and Kegan (1994). However, the perspective transformations of our participants were triggered by the highly emotional and traumatic impact of a life-threatening diagnosis. We wonder about the staying power of perspective transformations that emerge from non-life-threatening events and encourage subsequent research in this area as a means of illuminating our understanding of the key ingredients of an enduring perspective transformation.

The second major finding of this study confirmed the expectation that, over time, meaning schemes change. Our sample reported changes in perspectives about the future, self, and HIV. What the data do not reflect are subsequent perspective transformations.

This finding is explained by Mezirow's (1990b) distinction between meaning schemes and meaning perspectives. The former represent the specific beliefs and assumptions of individuals that constitute the rules for interpretation. Meaning perspectives provide the framework or structure for meaning schemes and serve to assimilate and transform experiences. A perspective transformation is the result of a change in meaning perspectives; it is the consequence of critically examining our meaning schemes, of asking the why question. Unlike the HIV-positive diagnosis which was the disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 1990b) that raised such basic questions as, "Why am I still alive?" or "Now, what is my purpose in life?" the events over the past two years have prompted what Mezirow refers to as content reflection (description/facts) of an experience or process reflection, the strategies one might employ in an experience. A different view of the self illustrates this distinction. Two years ago, the adults in this study explained how an HIV-positive diagnosis forced them to come to grips with what was really important in life and what would be their role in life with HIV, and they concluded that they should devote their remaining time helping other people. Thus, they shifted their meaning perspective from self- to other-oriented. The nature of their reflection on those two questions was premise reflection because they were assessing the why of their existence and their future.

Two years later the majority of the sample gave evidence that their thinking had gone from one extreme to a more balanced view -- that concern for the self is equally important to concern for others. By reflecting on their decision to help others and its consequences for their own lives, they realized that they could not effectively serve others if they did not care for themselves as well. Rather than asking the important question about the purpose of life, in the last two years the participants in this study discovered that their strategies (process reflection) for fulfilling their purpose needed adjustment.

Another possible explanation for changes in meaning schemes is time. First, the passage of two years provided an opportunity to reflect further about being HIV-positive. Second, we observed from the data that some of the individuals in this study have entered adult life transition stages in the past two years. Third, the perception by the HIV-positive adults that they have more time to live may have altered their assumptions about their longevity and, consequently, their behavior in regard to future plans.

Implications for Adult Education

On the one hand, the fact that we found perspective transformations hold over time is encouraging to those concerned about transfer and stability of learning. Transformational learning, acknowledged by some as an appropriate goal for adult education (Robertson, 1996), may endure because it effects a dramatic change in the learner. Thus, adult educators who purposefully configure adult learning experiences in order to bring about a perspective transformation have one empirical indicator that learners experiencing perspective transformations are likely to maintain the change.

On the other hand, that a perspective transformation is stable over time reflects serious concerns for the adult educator. Ethical issues as to the right of the adult educator to intentionally plan for perspective transformation as well as the responsibility for the subsequent impact of the perspective transformation in the lives of learners are important to consider. Robertson (1996) provides a helpful observation about this dilemma when he argues that while transformational learning is an appropriate goal for adult education, “the field neither adequately prepares nor supports adult educators to manage the dynamics of helping relationships or the dynamics of transformative learning within the context of those relationships” (pp. 43-44).

The second major finding of this study, that meaning schemes do change over time and in a developmentally positive direction, as indicated by our data, also has implications for adult education. This evidence offers assurances that fundamental beliefs and assumptions of learners are continuously changing; therefore, our efforts to provide learning experiences that help learners examine their meaning schemes may be productive for them. But, that conclusion assumes that changes in meaning schemes are always developmentally positive, as was true for our sample. The findings of this study do not counter that assumption, but neither do they confirm it as a universal experience. Thus, while we have found that alterations in meaning schemes are favorable, they may not change or may change negatively in other situations.

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Teacher Beliefs and Subject Matter Boundaries: The Struggle for Curricular Transformation Among Teachers of Adults

John M. Dirkx, Marilyn Amey, Lisa Haston

Abstract: Teachers of adult learners in formal settings are increasingly exploring more integrated approaches to curriculum and teaching. One location for such work is the community college. Among these teachers, however, who are traditionally content experts, an integrated approach often represents a paradigmatic shift in their understanding of what is most worth knowing. Little is known about how these teachers' beliefs influence, change, and are changed by participation in such curriculum efforts. This study reports on the beliefs and meaning and perspectives of one group of teachers attempting to bring about more curricular coherence and integration within four different disciplines of developmental education.

In the United States, community colleges are rapidly becoming major, postsecondary locations for the education and training of adults, contributing to what Grubb (1996) describes as a a "mid-skilled labor force." Many of the occupational programs offered through community colleges, however, require students to complete some level of basic academic or general education coursework. For many adult learners, these courses are experienced as fragmented pieces of information or skill, disconnected from each other and the learners' life contexts. Developmental education programs represent a specific example of this problem. Usually taught by subject matter specialists, these instructional experiences are designed to equip the "underprepared" adult with the academic skills he or she will need in later college-level work or on the job. But they often have little to do with each other or the learner's future employment contexts. Scholars and practitioners suspect the lack of a meaningful, coherent curricular experience may be a significant and fundamental reason why so many adults do not complete these courses and eventually drop out of college (Beane, 1995; Grubb, 1996). Efforts at curriculum reform, involving integration of academic and vocational content or integrating content more within the life contexts of the learners (Dirkx & Prenger, 1997), represent teachers' attempts to bring some coherence to an otherwise fragmented educational experience.

To be truly effective, however, integrated approaches require a paradigmatic shift from a focus on teaching to one on learning. Many community college teachers rely on curricular structures and instructional models intended to transmit to adults codified bodies of knowledge or skills for which they are perceived to be lacking or deficient (Brody, 1998). Learning-centered (O'Banion, 1997) and integrated approaches to instruction represent radical departures from what teachers have come to know as effective practice (Griffith & Conner, 1994; LeCroy & McClenney, 1992). This paper reports on one group of teachers who are collaboratively engaged in a process of transforming their curricula through the use of more integrated approaches. Our goal was to develop a deeper understanding of the beliefs and perspectives which teachers from different disciplines use to guide and make sense of curricular integration.

Theoretical framework

Our focus in this study was on the beliefs that teachers hold about the process of curriculum integration. According to Fang (1996, p. 49), "Teacher theories and beliefs represent the rich store of general knowledge of objects, people, events, and their characteristic relationships" that teachers hold and use in their planning, interactive thoughts and decisions, and when working face-to-face with students in the learning setting. We might think about a teacher's general knowledge in terms of subject-matter knowledge, pedagogical knowledge, and curricular knowledge (Shulman, 1986). Thus, teachers hold beliefs about the nature of the subjects they teach (what is most worth knowing and how we know it), ways to most effectively teach these subjects, and the variety of curricular materials available to them within their subjects and to their students within other subjects. Teacher beliefs constitute an important dimension of a teacher's general knowledge, forming a conceptual representation of what teachers perceive to be the reality of their educational setting. It is through this representation that teachers filter their perceptions and make sense of the curricular and pedagogical issues which confront them minute to minute within the learning setting (Dirkx & Spurgin, 1992).

Along with attitudes and values, a teacher's beliefs make up what is referred to as a "belief system (Pajares, 1992), or what Pratt (1998) refers to as "perspectives" or "points of view." According to Pratt, an individual's perspective reflects "an expression of beliefs and values related to teaching and learning (p. xii). These perspectives are not merely random assortments of beliefs, but ones which seem to cohere and are, in some way connected with each other. That is, they seem to be held together as if through a structure of some kind, not unlike what Mezirow (1991) refers to as meaning schemes and perspectives. Thus, we can expect seasoned, experienced teachers, trained within specific disciplines, to bring to a process of curricular development well-established systems of beliefs about what is most worth knowing and how it should be taught. The task of exploring a more integrated approach to teaching will challenge and make problematic some or most of these curricular beliefs held by the teachers. Our focus in this study was on the beliefs that educators of adults use and reconstruct as they seek to negotiate the boundaries of their disciplines within a process of curricular transformation.

Methods

This study focused on five developmental education teachers from Riverdale Community College (pseudonyms are used throughout). Riverdale, located within an urban setting, enrolls about 12,000 students annually. Approximately 10%-15% of the college's first year class participate in one or more developmental education courses. The students are quite diverse with respect to class, race, culture, and ethnicity. The teachers, three white men and two white women, are all trained in the disciplines of and with expertise in reading, writing, mathematics, and psychology and all five have been with the college for at least eight to ten years. After an initial workshop, the teachers decided to implement a pilot project aimed at implementing a more integrated, theme-based approach to their teaching (Dirkx & Prenger, 1997). They agreed to work with university-based researchers who would participate as co-learners in the project. A major assumption, held and made explicit by the university-based researchers, was the teachers would evolve and construct their own model of integrated curriculum and what it means within their particular context.

A qualitative case study method was used, informed by methodological assumptions and strategies of action research, ethnography, and phenomenology. Data were derived from weekly or semi-weekly teacher meetings over a year, documents distributed and discussed in these meetings, semi-structured, in-depth interviews with the teachers, and written synopses from each teacher, gathered at the end of the first semester. Interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and all data were subjected to analytic procedures commonly accepted for use in case study methodology.

Findings

Our findings indicate that teachers understand and approach curriculum integration largely through the lens of their respective disciplines, a position which both reinforces and is reinforced by the organizational structures within which they practice. This perspective of curricular integration is manifest in their beliefs about: (a) helping students see relevance and meaning of the content taught; (b) developing a sense of community among faculty and students; and (c) interpreting the organizational context in which they teach.

Making subject matter content meaningful. Teachers regarded integration as things they did within their own discipline to broaden the students' perspectives. This work was, none-the-less, considered to be a substantial change in the way they viewed and understood their teaching, as is illustrated in taking a more holistic approach to the teaching of reading, writing, thinking, listening, and critical thinking within the overall structure of a writing class. Joan remarked, "I see my integration of the language arts skills as a big shift for me, pedagogically, in teaching this [writing] class." For these practitioners, the notion of a curricular "theme" served as a context for teaching their respective disciplines, and as a "link between the disciplines," providing continuity and structure across otherwise unrelated areas. Jake observed that "Instructors are attempting to use common themes to reach their objectives for their respective classes." These themes allow the students to further explore the content in "terms of their own personal experiences and needs." John, the reading teacher, remarked, "I realize that athletics is [*sic*] where it's at for them...We might have them talk about some things that impacted them during that prior week that related to the theme." Jake suggested themes could help students improve their math ability: "The thing that happens in the themes is, if somebody really gets interested in quantifying what they're taking,...the math goes up real quick" In addition to contexts relevant to individuals, themes also provided common ground through which the students could experience the different disciplines. One teacher mused, "If you could take these various classes and you could find a common element that these kids can grab a hold of see how all this has value." Another remarked, "[We select these common themes and we use those as interest areas and, from our discipline, we all try to feed into these same kind of interest areas where our discipline may be different. But we're all using the same theme and perhaps the students can see that, 'Hey, these things...relate to one another in some way, shape or form.'"

Despite their interest in and excitement about themes, the teachers clearly saw them as secondary to the content of their respective disciplines. In the words of one teacher, "Instructors are attempting to use common themes to reach their objectives for their respective classes." Their task in curriculum development was to "locate content or problems within the present curriculum that have relevance to the themes." In our weekly meetings, teachers sometimes asked one another how they might address the themes within their respective classes or how they might incorporate math into the psychology class, reading into the math class, or writing into the reading class. In other words, integration means for the teachers an opportunity to teach another skill within one's own respective discipline. Themes provide loosely defined contexts for identifying these opportunities but there was little evidence that these opportunities were enacted in any significant way. It was not even clear that the teachers shared a common understanding of what role themes should play in the curriculum. Jake suggested, "I don't know if they're on the same tract that I am on that. It may mean something else for those people." Yet, there is a sense among some of the teachers that there is a potential in using themes not fully realized in their work so far. Tim indicated, "I guess my focus on that integrated thing was narrow as we started and it still is. I gotta broaden the perspectives." Some teachers thought more could be done with the themes than what they had been able to accomplish so far. Jane wished that she "could do a reading, writing, speaking theme to help, but how many hours a week is that?" Even still, themes were regarded as ways of illustrating discipline content, helping students realize its relevance to them, rather than being the central focus of study.

Developing a sense of community. An emerging sense of community among both teachers and students also characterizes the teachers' perspective of integration. The teachers highly valued the weekly meetings for giving them opportunities to discuss students' progress, problems they were having in and out of the classroom, and their whereabouts, or if they had not been in class for some time. The teachers demonstrated a richly textured knowledge of their students and their life context, and they saw the process as an opportunity to strengthen and share understandings of their students. In reflecting on the process at the end of the fall semester, the teachers pointed out that the "project fostered dialogue among some of the instructors working with students at risk" and provided for an exchange of information among the instructors "regarding particular students." They valued these opportunities to hold conversations with each other, regardless of the topic, and saw these times as beneficial. Tim remarked, "I think I've grown in the experience with the [course] and even association with [a colleague]." Another said, "It's nice to have this opportunity [to dialogue]. It really is." One teacher described it as bringing "together the different disciplines in '[developmental education] to create a more meaningful experience for the learners." They talked about the integrated instructional process as a "vehicle for conversation among the four disciplines," creating some "cohesiveness" for those working in developmental education.

The teachers also saw the process as fostering community among the students: "[This approach promises] to develop a community of learners among our students, providing them with a strong sense of belonging and increase in confidence through support of instructors and classmates." Another teacher said simply that the process established "community among students taking all four classes." Several weeks into the fall semester, the teachers commented on the sense of community that seemed to be developing among their students. This sense of community was perceived as critical to developing effective learning experiences for the students. It allowed the instructors within the separate courses to integrate common themes which provided the students with connection and coherence from class to class.

Influence of the organizational context. The teachers' interest in developing an integrated approach within their teaching was fueled by a sense that there is "no program" in developmental education at Riverdale. They perceive no formal leadership within developmental education, "a headless entity." As one teacher suggested, learning within the various developmental courses is often experienced by students as a "series of disjointed, unconnected activities." It is best understood as a "set of independent courses offered by four separate departments." During our meetings and in the interviews, the teachers repeatedly complained about the lack of communication among developmental faculty, little awareness of what each other is teaching or how, and no real sense of how their students are doing in other developmental courses. They often feel isolated from one another and from the College as a whole. Considerable time was spent in our meetings talking about problems "created" by counseling personnel, some administrators, and others in the institution who did not have a good understanding of what they were attempting to do in developmental education or the academic needs of their students.

Years of experience working alone within their disciplines have left these teachers skeptical of the possibility of meaningful change within a broader, programmatic or institutional context. The teachers perceive considerable institutional obstacles to pursuing their vision of a more coherent, integrated curriculum. These obstacles both implicitly and explicitly contribute to maintenance of a curriculum in which subject matter is the central focus. The teachers pointed to a lack of full institutional support for improving developmental education, identifying things that teachers"can't do," and that the institution "can't afford." Full-time teachers in developmental education also see the high use of adjunct teachers as a limit on what can be done because of a limited ability to ask things of them. The College expresses concern when teachers are not teaching exactly the same curriculum as the discipline advocates or are not sticking to the designated text, which are selected by departments. The teachers in this project saw a concrete connection between the organizational structure and the nature of curriculum: "You're trying in the end to change the structure...You can say you have [a thematic teaching model]...but there's a whole lot of people with reins in their hands. They're saying every opportunity they get, 'Whoa!'" Another teacher observed that there are "too many roadblocks for putting all four groups [of subjects] together."

Discussion

Because they work as developmental educators, these teachers already are adapting and using instructional strategies to better support student achievement formatively in and out of the classroom (Amey, forthcoming). This orientation and commitment is at the heart of developmental education and at the core of these teachers' beliefs. In many settings of higher education, this view in itself might represent a dramatic transformation. But, for these teachers, this notion is embedded within a particular view of what an integrated curriculum means. The teachers in this study are guided by a set of belief structures consistent with a multi-disciplinary perspective to curriculum integration (Drake, 1993). In this perspective, one views the curriculum through the lens of particular disciplines or subjects (e.g. math), but content from other areas (e.g. writing) may be used to enhance relevance. In this model, themes are applied to specific subject areas to illustrate or expand the meaning of the concepts embedded in the discipline, but the curriculum remains subject-centered and preserves the integrity of the discipline boundaries. The model provides teachers with a sense of common ground and provides a context through which to connect as colleagues, despite disciplinary boundaries. The process created a context in which they began to share information and, as they did, questions of structure and broader purposes emerged. Integration came to mean sharing with one another information about students, pointing out connections among the disciplines and how they may act on them, and fostering a sense of community among teachers and learners.

The notion of learning communities has been linked with curriculum integration and with transformation of the community college into the "learning college" (O'Banion, 1997). There is some indication among the teachers' processes of these transformative dynamics. It is clear from this study that the reflective, dialogical process in which the teachers engaged significantly contributed to the emerging sense of integration characteristic of their collaborative work. The nature of this process was intimately bound up with how they came to understand curricular integration. Yet, the findings suggest a dynamic tension between beliefs about curriculum grounded in the disciplines and the teachers' growing recognition of the epistemological demands of a more fully, experience-based and integrated approach to developmental education. This tension is played out within an organizational structure largely antithetical to substantive curricular change.

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Civil Society, Cultural Hegemony, and Citizenship: Implications for Adult Educators

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Abstract: The participants in this symposium provide a panorama of positions about civil society, citizenship and the dynamics of the exercise of power in the world of adult education. Theoretical approaches range from postmodernism to cultural studies to Marxist and critical theoretical positions. Case studies are equally diverse, ranging from North and Latin America to the Middle East.

The nineteenth century concept of "civil society"experienced an unprecedented rebirth during and after the crises that led to the fall of the Berlin wall and the disintegration of the Soviet Bloc. The concept has, since 1989, travelled to non-Western societies stretching from the Middle East to Africa, Japan, and Latin America. Equally significant is its extensive use by activists, academics, government circles, and the media in the birthplace of the concept -- West Europe. It is no exaggeration to claim that it is acquiring (together with its related concepts such as citizenship, and democracy) hegemonic status in the social sciences and humanities.

The rebirth of the concept and its application to diverse societies has thrown much light on the limitations and potentials of the concept. It has at the same time raised serious questions about the theoretical and epistemological assumptions underlying the concept. If Marx virtually abandoned the concept in his later work, many theorists today raise it to the level of a social theory capable of accounting for the dynamics of the globalizing world. There is, however, no consensus on the meaning of the concept even among those who find in it an indispensable heuristic opening.

The concept is of particular interests to educators, who have been debating for a long time the relationship between education and society, education and the state, the role of education in the (re)production of citizenry, or in the dialectics of hegemony and resistance. Many find the concept adequate for critiquing the way the state and the market exercise power through the construction and provision of lifelong learning. The participants in this symposium provide a panorama of positions about civil society, citizenship and the dynamics of the exercise of power in the world of adult education. Theoretical approaches range from postmodernism to cultural studies to Marxist and critical theoretical positions. Case studies are equally diverse, ranging from North and Latin America to the Middle East.

In many Western countries, social movements have been involved in the struggle over adult education. By contrast, in many developing societies, especially in the "modern" Middle East, the state has monopolized the provision of adult education and has reduced it to literacy campaigns. A central concern of adult educators with a critical or radical perspective is: How can adult education address the problems of poverty, patriarchy, equality, democracy, environment, peace, and justice? Any serous intervention in these areas often involves considerable redistribution of power. The papers in this symposium address this question in different ways. Thus, what follows is the summation of each author's case and analysis.

Pat Durish argues that the recent investigation into police treatment of student protesters at the APEC summit brought the issue of protest to the forefront of the public imagination in Canada. Reports and commentary emanating from diverse sources conjure up remarkably similar images of placard waving, angry youth shouting incoherently at men in suits. Inevitably, protest is seen as a strategy of last resort; a pastime of the youthfully naive, hysterical or militant feminists, the downtrodden or those who simply have too much time on their hands. Despite its historical persistence, protest continues to occupy a place on the margins of democratic political theory - an unfortunate but necessary adjunct to rational political deliberation. Even theorists sympathetic to the cause view protest as a means of allowing the marginalized to gain access to formal political processes (Sparks: 1997).

Feminists have long argued that the category of citizen, as it is defined in liberal democratic discourse, not only excludes women but is premised on the very fact of their exclusion. Furthermore, the continued theoretical demarcation of social space as private and public is the lynch pin upon which women's subordination rests and citizenship is forged (Fraser: 1989). However, citizenship is both discursive and performative (Landes: 1996). In conventional democratic theory, rational deliberation is viewed as the most appropriate form of civic engagement.

To include women and other marginalized groups would necessitate a complete overhaul of the category of citizen. However, to dethrone the masculine subject as the normative model from which citizenship is derived would also call into question the privileging of the speech act which lies at the centre of the deliberative process. The privileging of speech over other forms of expression marks the underlying masculinist nature - denoted by its emphasis on rationality - upon which liberal discourse rests. Protest as both public spectacle and everyday rebellious act could then be considered as a viable means for the enactment of citizenship. The implications of this move are profound. The boundaries of the political landscape would need to be redrawn; social space, political practice and participation would need to be reconceptualized.

A move to bring protest within the fold of acceptable political practice would mean imparting to citizens an agency that is hitherto unprecedented. This means subscribing to a vision of politics founded on a Foucauldian notion of power in which domination and resistance always operate concurrently. Protest is the means by which the marginalized other discovers itself as a subject capable of self-knowledge (Bhaba: 1997). Through protest alternative publics are formed and that which is private is brought into the public sphere. When envisioned in this way, protest functions as an important mode of articulation through which historical and contingent links between knowing subjects are forged (Mouffe: 1997). More importantly, protest is a means by which subjects come to know themselves as citizens.

In the highly differentiated milieu of large scale capitalism protest represents a performative form of annunciation. Far from being disruptive, protest functions as a cathartic exercise which allows for submerged identities and desires to be expressed publicly. Through protest citizens are able to challenge not only the power and ethical status of political institutions and processes but also the form and means by which the body politic is represented. In a western context, it is becoming increasingly clear that the most powerful forms of collective action are those that move beyond the realm of particular issues to subvert the norms of representation that structure and sustain relations of power (Butler: 1990). Protest provides a vantage point from which to view the contradictions inherent in a particular form of social organization (Douglas: 1966). The implication for adult educators in rethinking protest are myriad. When acknowledged as an acceptable and necessary form of civic engagement and political expression, protest becomes an important site for pedagogical intervention and learning as it involves the exploration of issues and representation, as well as the creation of new political subjects.

Rachel Gorman suggests that in the debate on the role of civil society there has been little attention paid to the ways in which adult educators are confined by state and market structures. Using experience and research in the field of Developmental Services in Ontario, she discusses how adult educators are positioned vis a vis the state, the market, and the hegemonic assumptions that are made about clients.

In recent years, the Canadian government policy has made a sharp turn toward eliminating social programs, and privatizing services. Cuts in funding to Developmental Services agencies have translated into less staffing hours and less advocacy. Agencies no longer pay support workers to fight for jobs in the community and, instead, rely on piecework contracts from for-profit companies. Disabled people working in agency vocational programs earn an average of $1.00 per hour. The market looms large behind these changes in government policy. Some of the largest funders of the Conservative Party's election campaign were for-profit health care agencies, who are poised to begin staffing and running sheltered workshops and group homes for a profit. These developments mirror private security companies' bids to run prisons for a profit.

The Ministry of Training and Human Resources and the Ministry of Community and Social Services are putting much effort into convincing adult educators in all sectors to prepare their students/clients for the "inevitable" global political economy. More importantly, we are asked to convince our students/clients that chronic underemployment and constant retraining are unavoidable aspects of our technologically advanced world. Reclaiming our educational spaces will require a coordinated struggle to reverse government policy changes, to strengthen the educational mandates of our agencies, and to resist and undermine the corporate takeover of minds.

Shahrzad Mojab studies the state of adult education in the Middle East, especially its Arab region, and examine adult education as a site of struggle for power involving numerous and highly unequal actors. She claims that Middle Eastern societies are experiencing rapid transformation due to both internal developments and the globalization of economy and culture. The process of change is, however, riddled with contradictions; we see abject poverty in the midst of wealth, despotism in a growing civil society, tribal-nomadic relations in a region devastated by rising megacities, and massive labour movements in the context of disintegrating economies. In theocracies such as Afghanistan, Iran, Oman, or Saudi Arabia, individuals are not treated as *citizens* in the modern, democratic, sense of the word. Women are officially denied full citizenship status in these states. Formal education is usually a state monopoly, and adult education has, in most countries, been reduced to literacy campaigns. In spite of considerable investment in formal and informal education, the majority of the adult population remains illiterate. Patriarchy, poverty, militarization, insufficient investment, and the absence of individual and political freedom are some of the main constraints on the provision of lifelong education.

Education is often viewed as a subversive phenomenon to be tamed through the control of the student movement, women's movement as well as the suppression of academic freedom. A wide gap separates the practice of adult education in the Middle East and current visions of adult learning.

The explosion of urban population, the revolution in communication technologies and the globalization of economy and culture create more expectation, and generate opposition to state policies and practices such as militarization and war, suppression of dissident voices, poverty, and oppression of women. The response of the state has been the stifling of civil society and social movements. If the Middle Eastern state is the main obstacle to the formation or functioning of a civil society of educated adults, the Western democratic state and its powerful market economy seem to be failing to educate adults in the growing "knowledge economy."

Amish Morrell contends that in North America, the 1960s saw a blossoming of counter-cultural movements in response to the alienation of urban industrial society, the Vietnam war, and the impending crises of social and environmental justice. Many of those who came of age within the 1960s counterculture went "back-to-the-land" in search of simple, self-sufficient lifestyles close to nature. Most took up subsistence farming and home-making, often supplementing their income with crafts production, or occasional work (Gould: 1997; Holm: 1998; and Jeffrey: 1997). This paper explores how alternative forms of cultural production can function as transformative pedagogical practices.

To better understand alternative cultures as sites of transformative learning, it is necessary to conceptualize learning as occurring in everyday cultural texts and representations, and through ordinary social and cultural practices. As such, learning is not confined to traditional educational institutions. Culture is simultaneously the everyday sites, processes, and products of learning, too. If one of the goals of adult education is to enable full participation in society, we also need to consider cultural literacy as a necessary for active citizenship. Cultural literacy, however, is differential. The social difference is deployed through defining who has access to particular forms of cultural meaning. How back-to-the-landers read rural landscapes was largely informed by a romantic vision of nature and rural communities to which they had privileged access as members of middle-class urban society. As critical adult educators we need to understand how access to cultural capital differentially constitutes our material and social realities.

Daniel Schugurensky's presentation will look at the linkages between citizenship-building and a transformative adult education in the transition to the 21st century. The first part of the presentation will frame the discussion within the context of neoliberal globalization and the retrenchment of the welfare state, and will examine changes in local, national and international configurations, as well as the changing roles of the state, the market and civil society. The current theoretical debate on citizenship will be analyzed, using as a starting point the three dimensions of citizenship (civil, political and social) identified by H.T. Marshall in his seminal work on the topic. The discussion on citizenship will connect to a critical examination of different models of citizenship education. The second part of the presentation will summarize the debates on participatory democracy and representative democracy, with a focus on the strengths and weaknesses of recent city-wide experiments of participatory democracy, and on the implications for adult education. In the conclusions, the paper will address the challenges and opportunities that the transition to the 21st century poses for an emancipatory citizenship education and for building a more just and democratic society.

Deborah Sword states that the 1930s to 50s are the modern origins of social movements. First seen as dangerous, they are now acknowledged as an important part of the political landscape. However, the turbulent times from which they emerged have changed and social movements have changed with them. If adult educators are to be agents of social change, it would be helpful to look at three trends.

The first trend, that is either disturbing or exciting depending on one's perspective, is the reduction of trust in public institutions (Nevitte 1996). As the publics' access to information and insight into official workings grows, trust decreases. As trust in officialdom decreases, the publics are feeling a need to become more educated so that they can engage in dialogue about the issues that impact them.

A second trend is that the marketplace has noticed that it must change its marketing strategy. It is trying not to insult women's intelligence nor despoil the environment and to include minorities and respect youth. It discovered that when it behaves ethically, known as corporate social responsibility, it's market share and profits increase. Thus, it is also slowly changing the way it does business, as well as its image. Other sectors are modifying how they do business to reflect this shift.

Civil society organizations (CSO), riding the third trend, are finding themselves invited to the seats of power. Occasionally, financial assistance accompanies the invitation. Their expertise is being sought by governments too stretched and under-resourced to do their jobs and too lacking in the alternatives to know the right thing to do without the input of CSO. CSO are moving from opposition to proposition, from protest to proposal and governments are listening. While many of the current adversaries continue to engage in their usual animosities, in other cases, it is becoming a challenge to keep up with the new alliances, often called partnerships.

In summary, the theoretical triad of market, state and civil society, or the dyad of publics/ private sphere, is not reflecting all that is really going on in practice. The lines among or between them are blurring: corporations are sponsoring CSO events and funding social movements, governments are hosting multi-stakeholder roundtable consultations in which consensus decision-making is setting policy, CSO are advising corporations and governments as outside experts and consultants. The questions remain: is this cooperation or co-optation? Is the incremental change that comes when CSO and social movements have some influence with policy makers enough? when the sectors or spheres share their learning, do the current dominant structures privilege some knowledge over the other(s).

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Grassroots Dissemination of Adult Education Research in Africa: Results of Recent Experience in Benin and Botswana

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Abstract: Adult education research is a very small industry in Africa, one whose products are underutilized in practice. This paper describes an initiative designed to promote "grassroots dissemination", in which African researchers and NGOs help target groups to work through relevant research results and compare them with their own experience.

Adult education research is a very small industry in Africa, though one with close connections to the continent's future. The challenges of decentralization, privatization and democratization have created situations in which local African communities and businesses must acquire in a short lapse of time a variety of skills and abilities that the still-deficient formal educational systems of their countries have generally not provided (Easton et al., 1998). A variety of adult and nonformal education programs are called upon to fill the gap. Applicable lessons of experience are at a premium, but mechanisms and resources to accumulate and compare the knowledge gained by African practitioners are severely lacking, whereas strategies borrowed whole-cloth from abroad or confected by foreign aid and international NGO institutions have demonstrated severe limitations (ADEA, 1997).

The problem is how not only to build up capacity for relevant adult education research on the continent, but equally how to ensure that the results of these inquiries are disseminated *laterally* to other practitioners and researchers in the same and neighboring countries and that an upward spiral of locally-rooted interaction and reflection is thereby initiated. A certain number of regional networks of educational researchers – like the Educational Research Network of West and Central Africa (ERNWACA) and the Association for the Development of Education in Africa (ADEA) -- have come into being in recent years with support from international donors, but the research they have conducted has not been widely disseminated on the continent itself. In particular, adequate means have not yet been found to promote either its policy application within Africa or its assimilation and use by practitioners in the field.

This paper presents and analyzes results of a program designed to reverse the trend, the Grassroots Educational Research Dissemination (GERD) Project, funded by US Agency for International Development's "Advancing Basic Education and Literacy" (ABEL II) endeavor in four African countries: Benin, and Botswana (where work is already completed); Kenya and Senegal (where it is currently underway). GERD represents the second phase of an effort designed to promote generation and application of innovative adult education research both *within* Africa and *by* African researchers. The first phase, in which the authors of the proposed paper were likewise involved, entailed inviting African researchers in eight different countries to propose and implement small-scale research projects focusing on some aspect of three themes selected as priority emphases by the Working Group on Nonformal Education of the ADEA:

(1) How local communities, associations and businesses acquire the skills needed to meet the challenges of decentralization and privatization;
(2) New strategies for collaboration between adult basic education and formal primary schooling on the continent;
(3) New models for cooperation between public and private sectors in the delivery of nonformal education services.

Twelve different studies were conducted on different facets of these topics on a performance contract basis. A large degree of latitude was accorded research teams to determine their own use of funds and their own methodologies, though technical support was provided throughout. Studies were not all of equal quality, but most produced findings and insights of great potential interest to the larger community of policymakers, researchers and practitioners in Africa as well as very valuable experience for their authors (Closson and Capacci, 1997).

The second phase of the work is devoted to promoting the dissemination of these findings within Africa itself. Both traditional means of dissemination (books, journal articles, conference presentations) and recent electronic ones (Internet publication, e-mail networking) have distinct limitations in Africa, where few of the people most concerned may have regular access to these media. Print and electronic transmission is still important and can serve as a complementary mechanism for dissemination, but other avenues must be pioneered in order to ensure exposure of and assimilation by key stakeholder groups.

GERD has developed an innovative solution to the problem, one which combined new means for research dissemination, more active approaches for engaging stakeholder groups in the inquiry, and parallel means for promoting capacity building and institutional development among the groups involved.

Background

The entire program of research described here was in a sense initiated five years ago in a study of "Decentralization and Local Capacity Building in West Africa" (Easton et al. 1998) carried out by Florida State University and teams of African researchers under the joint auspices of the Club du Sahel/OECD and the Interstate Committee for Drought Abatement in the Sahel (CILSS). That work was recently completed but proved highly innovative in both substantive and methodological respects and led to further efforts in both dimensions.

Substantively, the study focused on the ways in which local businesses, associations and communities in five West African countries (Burkina Faso, Ghana, Mali, Niger and Senegal) have managed to acquire – or mobilize -- the skills and knowledge required to assume a variety of new development functions and responsibilities. Forty case studies were conducted on local groups that had taken self-management initiative in domains as varied as natural resource management, crop marketing, financial intermediation and health service delivery, and had done so despite generally low levels of available schooling or even prevalent conditions of adult illiteracy. Three key findings of the study proved particularly provocative of further reflection and research.

(1) One was that success in these ventures could be attributed in good part to the way in which the groups in question managed to the ability of the groups to draw on and mobilize the real but highly disparate and often hidden sources of existing competence in their communities – primary school dropouts and leavers, graduates of local literacy programs, participants in Koranic or biblical instruction, beneficiaries of extension or apprenticeship programs, out-migrants willing to return home, initiates of traditional forms of education, etc.

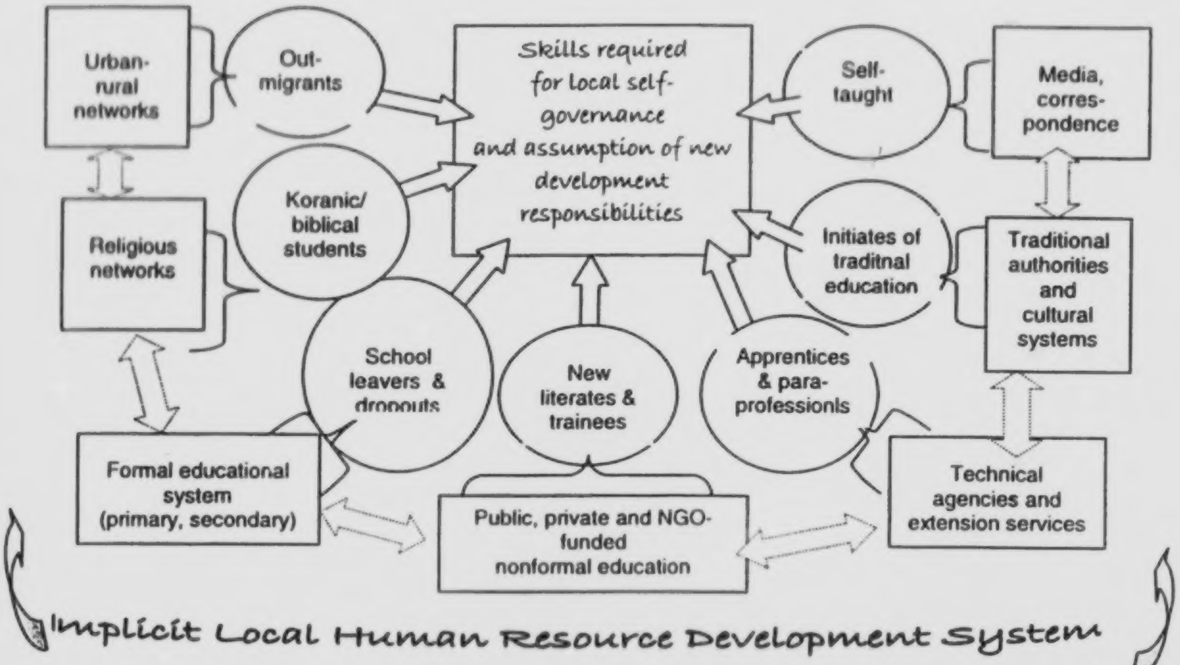
(2) A second provocative finding was that assimilation of these varied "human resources" and their enlistment in common self-management and development tasks posed problems of retraining and standardization that had been most often handled by local nonformal adult education programs, which served *de facto* as the training system and "homogenizer" for the new enterprises.

(3) A third result of major interest was that a growing number of local women's associations constituted one of the most dynamic elements in the mix and one that made the most systematic use of nonformal and adult education, given the inequities from which women

and girls have suffered to date in the formal education system of most of the countries involved.

Figure 1 pictures the scheme for mobilization of competence and "recycling" through adult and nonformal education that appeared in most successful cases studies.

Figure 8: Sources of Local Competence


Urban-rural networks
Out-migrants
Skills required for local self-governance and assumption of new development responsibilities
Self-taught
Media, corres-pondence
Religious networks
Koranic/ biblical students
Initiates of traditnal education
Traditional authorities and cultural systems
School leavers & dropouts
New literates & trainees
Apprentices & para-professionls
Formal educational system (primary, secondary)
Public, private and NGO-funded nonformal education
Technical agencies and extension services
Implicit Local Human Resource Development System

Methodologically the studies also proved innovative and stimulating to new efforts. Research was carried out by a tandem of national and local research teams, supported by a group of international consultants drawn from Africa, Europe and North America. Most significantly, actual execution of the studies was confided in teams of African researchers on a performance contract basis, who then analyzed and compared results among themselves.

The problem of research dissemination

It was this work that helped give birth thereafter to an initial round of additional research carried out by African researchers on topics deriving, in part, from the PADLOS-Education Study and adopted by the Working Group on Nonformal Education of the ADEA as unifying themes for study and inquiry over the two year period from 1995-1997.

Results of this biennium of work made clear both an immense and largely unrecognized potential and some real procedural problems. The potential was abundantly illustrated by the energy and productivity of participating African researchers, who were highly interested by the opportunity for modest funding to carry on their own research, coupled with technical support in its execution and the chance to exchange results with colleagues. Such opportunities remain exceedingly rare in the countries concerned. An increasing number of West African educators are completing degree programs, either on the continent or overseas, that include training in research, but most funding for research continues to be controlled by donor countries, and the lion's share of that goes to outside-directed studies. Opportunities for African researchers to practice and develop their skills are therefore few and their capacities dwindle, through no lack of will on their own part. The ABEL and ADEA research programs therefore elicited a great deal of interest.

But they also posed a further problem. Western educational research practice is based in large part on a "perfect information" postulate from neo-classical economics: namely, that researchers build on each other's efforts and that the results of their work influence and are tested in the crucible of practice thanks to optimal circulation of information. In other words, study results are assumed to be disseminated along multiple networks and brought to the awareness of other researchers and of policymakers in relatively rapid order. Each new study and each instance of major policy making in the related area of practice is supposedly informed to some degree by the fruit and synthesis of all previous work. Though this model is scarcely perfectly applicable in the United States or Europe, it approximates what happens and what people thinks is supposed to happen closely enough to prove serviceable. But in sub-Saharan Africa, as in many developing areas, impediments to the lateral circulation of information and lack of resources for communications are such that this image of research dissemination is nearly inapplicable. The payoff to building on the results of previous work is no less and -- arguably -- the need for articulating continent-specific paradigms is even greater. But other means must be found to accomplish this goal in the short- and medium-term.

The second phase of the worldwide ABEL Project has been targeted at accomplishment of just this goal, as it is principally devoted to issues of research dissemination. Under the aegis of this renewed funding, the African research program just described moved to a new stage as well, embodied by the Grassroots Educational Research Dissemination Project, initiated in 1998.

A democratic solution

GERD involves both a focus on supporting dissemination by and to African stakeholders of research conducted by African researchers themselves, and a further "institutionalization" of the process on the African continent. Interested National Working Groups on Nonformal Education in African countries issue a "Request for Proposal" or solicitation to in-county adult education institutions (universities, research institutes, NGOs) inviting them in turn to study the set of findings so far issuing from the ABEL and ADEA research programs and then to propose "proactive" dissemination projects. Each project is required to pinpoint findings of particular interest to the country in question as well as a specific stakeholder group – whether policymakers, adult education providers or local communities – to whom the proposing institution feels these results are especially relevant. The proposers must also indicate how they plan to expose the stakeholder group to the material and work through its significance and potential policy implications with them, plus the results they hope to attain in this manner and the fashion in which these outcomes will be evaluated.

Researchers and institutions in several African countries rapidly expressed interest in this undertaking. It had been decided, however, in consultation both with ABEL Project personnel in Washington and coordinators of the international Working Group on Nonformal Education of the ADEA that, as an additional measure of institutional development and capacity building, submissions would only be accepted from duly constituted National Working Groups (NWGs) of the ADEA. Every encouragement was therefore given to respondents from countries not yet having such a body either to form one with joint participation from public and private sector stakeholders or to entrust these functions in some existing organization or consortium in the country that met the criteria of focus on NFE and public sector-private sectors partnership.

The first two countries to qualify and seek funding were Benin and Botswana. The dissemination work was therefore undertaken with them starting in the summer of 1998. A contract was drawn up with each providing funds for the work of the WG/NFE itself (preparation of the RFP to local institutions, dissemination of initial materials, selection of subcontractors, organization of inaugural workshop and final conference, supervision of field work) and for its subcontracts with the in-country institutions that would be carrying out the work in the field. Participating institutions in each country were to cull through the body of studies carried out by African researchers under ABEL and ADEA aegis and select the ones they felt most critical to disseminate and discuss. The three eventually selected by subcontracted institutions in Benin were ones on acquisition of skills in the informal sector of the economy (originally carried out in Senegal and Chad), on learning in women's economic cooperatives (Ghana and Mali), and on the practical applications of Koranic schooling (Niger, Mali, Guinea and Senegal). In Botswana, on the other hand, the choice went to alternate strategies of primary education (study executed in Uganda), accelerated literacy for out-of-school youth (Burkina Faso) and, once again, skill acquisition in the informal sector.

Capsules of the implementation of the dissemination activities in each country will give the reader a sense of how the new method worked and the initial results attained. One example is selected from each country:

In Benin, one of the local institutions with which the WG/NFE subcontracted was "Recherche-action en matière de production èconomique" (RAMPE), which proposed an activity devoted to disseminating the results of the Ghana/Mali study on learning in women's cooperatives to units of the women's enterprise federation of Toviklin in the Valley of Ouémé, northern Benin. There are 21 women's cooperatives in this federation, and RAMPE focused on 10 of them. Questionnaires and discussion guides were used to help members of each cooperative to review the results of the Mali-Ghana study and compare it to their own experience. The questionnaires also served to gather some additional information about the overall situation of the Toviklin federation that might fuel broader comparison. RAMPE staff report that women's federation members greatly appreciated this insight into the work of women elsewhere in West Africa and the occasion created in this way to articulate and analyze their own experience. Quite a list of resolutions and conclusions were generated by the participants, including recognition that their cooperatives had not advanced as far in the direction of credit management and local governance initiative as had those highlighted in the outside studies and could learn from them; and that the issue of functional literacy in local African languages was every bit as critical in Toviklin as it appeared in Mali and Ghana, and renewed efforts should be made to ensure female participation in these programs, as well as their application to the current management tasks of the cooperative.

The Botswana WG/NFE subcontracted for part of the work it had assumed to the Department of Adult Education of the University of Botswana The Department had proposed to invite all youth organizations in the country listed with the National Youth Service to a workshop to examine the findings of a Uganda study on that country's COPE Project ("Complementary Opportunity for Primary Education"). COPE is an alternative schooling formula targeted at out-of-school youth and young adults. Copies of the Uganda study and questions regarding it were sent to 50 organizations. Nineteen people representing fourteen organizations participated in the workshop itself and -- in the concluding evaluation -- were unanimous in finding the proceedings relevant to their work and clear. A critique of the Uganda study and a list of recommendations for action by the participating youth organizations were among the *products of the workshop. In his opening remarks, Dr. Stanley Mpofu, coordinator of the Botswana WG/NFE, intoned, with only a bit of hyperbole, that "for the first time in the history of research in Africa, an initiative has emerged to bring research knowledge to the people who utilize it."*

Conclusions

First results of the grassroots dissemination activity are therefore encouraging, though it is not yet a year old. Work is now underway to undertake similar initiatives in Senegal and Kenya as a second round. At the same time, the experience gained thus far, added to outcomes of the previous phases of PADLOS-Education and ABEL/ADEA work described above, serve as the basis for a few interim conclusions that will be of interest to adult educators and African researchers:

(1) *Going for it* -- The model proposed, and particularly the transfer of initiative and responsibility to African researchers and the provision of a modicum of funding on a contract basis, proved extremely motivating for the participants.

(2) *Learning comparison* -- It was at times difficult to get across the methodology proposed. People tended to want to do their own studies rather than to help stakeholder groups to compare their experience with the fruits of an existing study; but in all cases those involved caught on to the methodology in fairly short order and did creditable work. Explicit guidance in approaches to eliciting stakeholder experience and comparing it with previous research proved useful.

(3) *RFPs* -- The aspect of the methodology that proved the most problematic and difficult to implement was the "request for proposal" strategy. The competition dimension of this approach did not initially appeal to African counterparts, most of whom preferred to attribute responsibility for the subcontracted work by some other means. However, the performance criteria included in the work -- with which they basically agreed -- began gradually to drive the model back toward some compromise formula that at least required aspiring subcontractors to demonstrate competence and responsibility.

(4) *Participatory/action research* -- The involvement of local stakeholders in the activity proved in fact to be a stimulant both for better quality in the work of the official researchers and for more practical content in the studies.

(5) *Opportunities for training* -- The experience was extremely rich in these, and offered at the same time a chance to assess where outside support and trial-and-practice are most useful in the development of local research capacity. Three of the most important areas proved to be operationalizing research questions; getting beyond rhetorical language and generalities; and learning to manage an actual funded research project, including on-time production of deliverables.

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Reflection Plus 4: Classifying Alternate Perspectives in Experiential Learning

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Abstract: This paper presents five theoretical perspectives that can inform experiential learning. A rationale for this typology is outlined briefly, then each perspective is described according to learning dimensions such as view of knowledge, learner, power, and role of educator. A chart summary comparing these perspectives will be distributed at the session.

Introduction: Rationale and Classificatory Method

"Experiential learning" is arguably one of the most significant areas for current research and practice in adult education, and increasingly one of the most problematic. The term "experiential learning" is used variously to designate kinesthetic directed instructional activities in the classroom, non-directed "life experience", special workplace projects interspersed with 'critical dialogue' led by a facilitator, learning generated through social action movements, and even team-building adventures in the wilderness. Current theory and practice seems to be dominated by an understanding of experiential learning as reflective construction of meaning, with particular emphasis on 'critical reflection' and dialogue. However, alternate perspectives about the nature of human experience, and the relationships among experience, context, mind, and 'learning', raise important issues about the assumptions and values of the reflective view. Further inquiry into experiential learning may be assisted by clarifying distinctions among these perspectives.

To this end, this paper offers a typology of five currents of thought which appear to have developed in recent scholarly writing addressing experiential learning. These were selected for discussion here either because of their prominence in recent writing about learning and development, or because they offer an original perspective that may raise helpful questions about existing understandings. The typology is not intended to provide a comprehensive meta-review of experiential learning literature, but to honor and clarify different perspectives so that dialogue among them may continue.

The five currents of thought selected have been given informal titles for purposes of reference in this paper, which should not be understood as formally-designated theory names. These titles include reflection (a constructivist perspective), interference (a psycho-analytic perspective rooted in Freudian tradition), participation (from perspectives of situated cognition), resistance (a critical cultural perspective), and co-emergence (from the 'enactivist' perspective emanating from neuroscience and evolutionary theory). The typology will compare these five perspectives by briefly summarizing their position on each of eight dimensions, then suggesting critiques and questions raised for each perspective by others. The eight dimensions are focus, basic explanatory schemata, view of knowledge, view of relation of knower to object and situation of knowing, view of learning process, view of learning goals and outcomes, view of the nature of power in experience and knowing, and view of the educator's role, if any in experiential learning. These dimensions are rooted in Greeno's (1997) response to debates about the nature of situated knowing, with additions from learning issues raised in the other perspectives presented here.

Any typology such as this makes compromises to produce a certain clarity. The focus here on a limited number of dimensions eliminates other dimensions which some may consider significant. It also eliminates the ability to examine rich details of the subtleties, differences and interactions among these currents of thought. Such a broad typology may blur important internal differences within each perspective, and build the illusion of static reification of these dynamic perspectives. But these limitations may hopefully be overlooked in face of the potential usefulness of this tool.

1. Reflection (a constructivist perspective)

Reflection on lived experience towards construction of knowledge is the basic premise of the work of Kolb

(1984), Boud (1995), Wells (1996), Clark and Merriam (1993), Mezirow (1990), and many other adult educators. In experiential learning, the individual is assumed to be the primary actor in a process of knowledge construction, understanding is viewed as a conscious, rational process, and knowledge is a set of structures stored in memory that can be represented, expressed, and transferred to new situations.

Constructivism has a long and distinguished history (Vygotsky, 1978; Piaget, 1966; Wells, 1995) portraying learners as independent constructors of their own knowledge, with varying capacity or confidence to rely on their own constructions. Through reflection on experience, a learner is believed to construct a personal understanding of relevant structures of meaning derived from his or her action in the world. In the field of adult learning Schon (1983, 1987) has been a significant proponent of constructivism, where reflection during and after 'action' is considered an important mental process required to transform experience into knowledge. The educator's role has been described as facilitator or 'animator' (Boud and Miller, 1996) of learning.

Critics such as Britzman (1998), and Sawada (1991) maintain that the reflective constructivist view is simplistic and reductionist. It reifies rational control and mastery, ignores the role of desire in learning, and sidesteps ambivalences, vicissitudes and multiple internal resistances in the learning process. Its view that experience must be processed through reflection clings to binaries drawn between complex blends of reflection/action, doing/learning, implicit/explicit, active/passive, and life experience/instructional experience. From a feminist perspective, Michelson (1996) observes that emphasis on (critical) reflection depersonalizes the learner as an autonomous rational knowledge-making self, disembodied, rising above the dynamics and contingency of experience. The learning process of "reflection" presumes that knowledge is extracted and abstracted from experience by the processing mind. This ignores the possibility that all knowledge is constructed within power-laden social processes, that experience and knowledge are mutually determined, and that experience itself is knowledge-driven and cannot be known outside socially available meanings. Further, argues Michelson (1996), the reflective or constructivist view of development denigrates bodily and intuitive experience, advocating retreat into the loftier domains of rational thought from which 'raw' experience can be disciplined and controlled.

2. Interference (a psycho-analytic perspective)

Britzman (1998) interrogates learning theory from psychoanalytic principles developed first by Anna Freud. This perspective views learning as interference of conscious thought by the unconscious, and the 'uncanny' psychic conflicts that result. The general learning process is 'crafting the self through everyday strategies' of coping with and coming to understand what is suggested in these conflicts.

This view suggests that our experiences are a series of psychic events, much of which we repress: anxieties and fears, disruptions and mistakes, vicissitudes of love and hate. The unconscious can't be known directly but its workings constantly interfere with our intentions and our conscious perception of direct experience. These workings constantly 'bother' the ego, producing breaches between acts, thoughts, wishes, and responsibility. Despite the ego's varied and creative defenses against confronting these breaches, the conscious mind is forced to notice random paradoxes and contradictions of experience, and uncanny slips into sudden awareness of difficult truths about the self. These truths are what Britzman (1998) call "lost subjects", those parts of our selves that we resist, then try to reclaim and want to explore, but are afraid to. We learn by working through the conflicts of all these psychic events. Experiential learning is coming to tolerate one's own conflicting desires, while recovering the selves that are repressed from a terror of full self-knowledge.

Critique from situative perspectives might argue that psychoanalytic theory dwells too strongly on the internal, with insufficient attention paid to the systems that bind the changing human mind and its psychic traumas to its changing contexts. Lave (1988) points out that context is frequently undertheorized as some kind of container into which individuals are dropped. The context may be acknowledged to affect the person but the person is still viewed as an autonomous agent of knowing with his or her own psychic systems, which are still viewed as fundamentally distinct from other contextual systems. Further, the psychoanalytic view seems to assume that learning can take place entirely as a mental process, regardless of patterns of participation in continuously evolving communities. Psychoanalytic views may mistake learning and doing, individuals and the tools and communities of their activities, as separable processes.

3. Participation (a situative perspective)

Situative perspectives (i.e. Lave and Wenger, 1991; Brown, Duguid, and Collins, 1989; Rogoff, 1990; Greeno, 1997) theorize how individuals learn to participate in practices in interactional systems. A system is not containable nor clearly separated from any individual actor in it, but is a flow of energy, action and relationships, including the work and learning of its participants. Knowing and learning are defined as engaging in changing processes of human activity in this particular system. In other words, knowledge is not mental structures acquired by the learner, but a process of participation in interaction with systems.

Individuals participate in a system by interacting with the community (with its history, assumptions and cultural values, rules, and patterns of relationship), the tools at hand (including objects, technology, languages and images), and the moment's activity (its purposes, norms, and practical challenges). Knowledge emerges from these elements interacting (Lave and Wenger, 1991). Thus knowing is interminably inventive and entwined with doing. Situated theorists ask, What constitutes meaningful action for a particular individual in a given context? How is the development of knowledge constrained or created by the intersection of several existing practices in a particular space? (Lave and Wenger, 1991)

Learning is "improved participation" in a particular situated activity (Greeno, 1997). Improved participation results partly from becoming more attuned to constraints and affordances of different real work situations. The educator may arrange authentic conditions and activities in which the learners practice participating. When learners attend to how specific properties and relations influence possibilities for acting in one situation, they can more easily transform that activity through interaction with other systems and thus develop ability to participate meaningfully in a wider range of situations (Greeno, 1997).

Some constructivists have criticized the situative perspective for its inability to explain sufficiently to the phenomena of generalization and transfer, as well as its lack of attention to individual intent and layers of self as these influence participation. The critical cultural perspective would challenge its a-political position. Relations and practices related to dimensions of race, class, gender, and other cultural/personal complexities, apparently ignored by situative theorists, determine flows of power which in turn determines different individuals' ability to participate meaningfully in particular practices of systems. Finally, situated perspectives seem silent on the issue of resistance in communities where tools and activities may be unfair or dysfunctional. The situated view assumes that encouraging participation in the existing community is a good thing, and thus provides no tools for judging what is deemed 'good' in a particular situation, or changing the status quo.

4. Resistance (a radical cultural perspective)

Views of experiential learning and pedagogy that entwine knowledge with power and the collective are evident in the work of critical cultural theorists such as Freire, bell hooks, and Giroux (1992), Kellner (1995), feminists such as Hart (1992) and Luke (1990), post-colonialists such as Said (1993) and Spivak (1988), and many others. These writers maintain politics are central to human activity, identity, and meaning. They make explicit and demystify existing moment-to-moment interplays of power, and advocate social reconstruction by seeking more inclusive, generative and integrative alternatives to certain oppressive cultural practices and discourses.

Critical cultural perspectives suggest that experiential learning in a particular cultural space is shaped by the discourses and their semiotics (the signs, codes, and texts) that are most visible and accorded most authority by different groups. These discourses often create dualistic categories such as man/woman, reflection/action, learning/doing, formal/informal which determine unequal distribution of authority and resources. Such dualisms also legitimate certain institutions and exclude others, and generally limit the possibilities of people's identities. Giroux (1992) analyses borders thought to define cultural communities, examining the identity options constructed for people within certain borders and the consequences for those who transgress. Others like Kellner (1995) draw attention to representations of people within cultural discourses and practices. They offer tools for analysing identity categories, looking at who is represented as Other to the 'norm', and how these representations of Other are used to contain, define, control behavior and relations, explain historical patterns, and position authority and resistance.

Giroux and others (i.e. Edwards and Usher, 1998) are interested in ways location/dislocation functions in people's learning. New spaces for alternative cultural practices and identities are being opened by border crossings and blurrings in this globalized world, where experience may be 'real' or 'virtual'. Post-colonialist writers claim that all of our histories, and therefore our experiences and learning, are entwined in some way with colonization. They examine how dislocation has worked to depersonalize and dislocate colonial subjects, what worlds are being created from these oppressions (Spivak, 1988), what patterns of dissent have resulted (violent, pacifist, and withdrawal) and how dissent and resistance have been created by the very structure of colonial power (Said, 1993). Bhabha (1994) suggests that new hybrid knowledges and spaces are developing from our collective histories of colonial dominance/resistance.

Learning is a process of naming these currents, practices and symbols both to unmask practices of oppression/suppression, and to recover what cultural writers call 'subject positions' that are lost in rigid narrow identity categories. Educators can help make explicit the politics and constraints of cultural sites, both inside and outside learners and at crossings where inside meets outside. Educators can help themselves and others become more aware of how, through their experiential learning, their own natures are constituted, their own positionalities, and their interpretations and responses to difference. Kellner (1995) cautions educators not to suppose a monolithic "dominant ideology" which is inherently manipulative or evil, and to remember that people are not a mass of passive, homogeneous non-critical victims of a dominant ideology. But within this cautionary frame, the learning goal is liberation and transformation of people's culturally-determined perspectives, so they become empowered to resist oppression, transcend limited cultural rules and images, and assert their own voices. Giroux (1996) writes about pedagogy as opening spaces to discern new futures, craft new identities and seek social alternatives that may be obscured by current dominant ideologies and struggles.

There has been much criticism of emancipatory views of experiential learning. Feminist scholars have shown the repressive potential in any emancipatory efforts (i.e. Ellsworth, 1992). Troubling issues about who presumes enlightenment, and how authentic democratic participation can ever be achieved through existing discourses which favor certain knowledge interests over others, have not been resolved. Britzman's (1998) psychoanalytic view challenges the processes of individual or collective 'critical reflection' as being a highly limited means of coming to self-knowledge. Cultural analysis does not attend sufficiently to the extraordinary significance of desire and the nuance of the unconscious in determining understandings and behaviors developed through experience. Our attempts at achieving deeper awareness by examining experience solely through rational 'critical' thinking are thwarted by the ego's investments in maintaining its own narcissism.

Enactivists and certain situated perspectives of psychology claim to have moved away from viewing power as a primary determinant of systems' evolution. They reject as too deterministic the structural view of a dominant elite subordinating other groups. Sumara and Davis (1997) eschew entirely what they describe as traditional perspectives of domination/oppression as perpetuating negative views of power. They explain that systems theories of learning place much greater emphasis on mutual affect, collectivity, and coemergence -- which transcend the limitations and self-perpetuated negative circles created by power/resistance-based critical thinking.

5. Co-Emergence (the 'enactivist' perspective)

Enactivism is a theory explaining the co-emergence of learner and setting (Varela, 1995; Maturana, 1995; Varela, Thompson, and Rosch, 1991). This perspective of experiential learning assumes that cognition depends on the kinds of experience that come from having a body with various sensori-motor capacities embedded in a biological, psychological, cultural context. Enactivists explore how cognition and environment become simultaneously enacted through experiential learning. The first premise is that the systems represented by person and context are inseparable, and the second that change occurs from emerging systems affected by the intentional tinkering of one with the other.

Obviously people make meanings, choose actions, and reflect on these actions as intentional agents within these systems. However, they do so with highly limited observations, especially of themselves and the actual knowledge they express through their own actions, and only partial understandings of the indeterminate system in which they participate. An individual "lays down a path while walking" (Varela, 1995). There is no residue of knowledge left in one's head that can be represented or transferred to different contexts of action, because knowledge is whatever was expressed in embodied action.

In analysing a process through which a group learned and changed over time, Sumara and Davis (1997) show the usefulness of enactivism as an explanatory tool. They describe how systems of cognition and evolution interacted in spontaneous, adaptable and unpredictable ways that changed both, resulting in "a continuous enlargement of the space of the possible" (p. 303). In other words, people participate together in what becomes an increasingly complex system. New unpredictable possibilities for thought and action appear continually in the process of inventing the activity, and old choices gradually become no longer viable in the unfolding system dynamics. Knowledge flows as action in this dynamic system. It is not a set of understandings 'constructed' by an individual or collective.

Facilitators may have a role in helping all to understand their involvement, and finding honest ways to record the expanding space and possibilities. Questions of facilitation are offered by Sumara and Davis (1997): How does one trace the various entangled involvements in a particular activity in a complex system, while attending assiduously to one's own involvement as participant? How can the trajectories of movement of particulate actors in relation to the system's objects be understood and recorded in a meaningful way?

Challenge to this view from a critical cultural perspective observes that discussion of experiential learning is inseparable from cultural practices, social relations, images and representations. Perspectives such as enactivism don't address inevitable power relations circulating in human cultural systems. Therefore the influences on patterns of co-emergence exerted by culturally-determined meaning categories such as gender/race/sexuality/class/religion may be indiscernible from a system-perspective. In addition, neither systems nor situative perspectives appear to attend to the way cultural practices (such as tools of discourse, image, and representation) have been shaped and maintained by dominant groups in the system, and continue to sustain interests of some participants in the system more than others. Further, a systems view like enactivism demands that the interests and identities of individual elements be surrendered to the greater community. Therefore, individuals become vulnerable to a few who manipulate the system's discourses to sustain their own power, ensuring that their experiences become the most valued knowledge in the collective.

Implications for theorizing the nature of experiential learning

A careful comparison of theoretical frames is needed to help researchers and educators better understand and name the various processes occurring as experiential learning, and constitute their own roles relative to these processes in moral, sensitive ways. The perspectives highlighted by this paper may help interrupt dominant views of experiential learning as reflective knowledge construction, and open spaces for dialogue between situative and enactivist, constructivist, critical, and psychoanalytic voices. These perspectives can also move us toward developing more robust theoretical tools for experiential learning that integrate issues of reflection, interference, participation, power, and co-emergence raised by different perspectives. Meanwhile, such comparative examination of different perspectives can enlighten and raise new questions for each perspective, as well as help researchers, theorists, and educators situate and think carefully about beliefs of experience and learning underpinning their own practice.

The further challenge is to examine the links and blurrings among these perspectives, to locate points where they already agree or where they may complement one another. More in-depth comparison should identify and probe, with careful analysis of terms and conditions, points of complete disagreement. These points of controversy may help us choose the most imminent questions for our further inquiry into the nature of experiential learning.

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The Homeplace - Not the Marketplace: Developing a Critical Feminist Approach to Adult Education

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Abstract: In this paper I explore the development of a critical feminist theoretical approach that draws upon Habermasian theory and feminist discourses to examine connections between adult education and the homeplace.

Introduction

Currently, there is a pervasive "bottom-line" mentality that reinforces the dictates of the marketplace in adult education. Globalized capitalism has created an almost universal sense of unease and anxiety as individuals and nation-states compete against one another. In this climate, a technical-rational perspective on adult education has gained ascendancy. While some critical adult educators (Collins, 1990; Welton, 1995) have drawn upon the work of Habermas (1984, 1996) to expose some of the limitations of narrow, short-sighted agenda for adult education, some feminist theorists (Hart, 1997, Miles, 1996) have proposed an even more radical critique that challenges underlying masculinist values that serve to give primacy to profit over life. I argue that a new focus for adult education can be developed using a critical feminist approach that examines connections to the homeplace, rather than the marketplace.

The Marketplace

The marketplace influence has encouraged the development of short-sighted and competitive approaches to adult education, leading to an ever widening gap between the haves and have-nots in our world (Hart, 1992). We can see this competition at all different levels, from individuals to nation-states. Like the little boy with his finger stuck in a dike, many individuals are turning to adult education to shore up their own barricades against the capricious tides of the globalized marketplace. Education is means to bolster their own individual credentials and to locate themselves where they will be safe from the rising tide of unemployment, corporate downsizing, and shrinking social safety nets. The core workforce has increasing access to continuing educational opportunities, while those on the periphery (women and minorities are overrepresented in this sector) are further marginalized (Hart, 1992).

A couple of decades ago the Faure Report (1972) presented a powerful argument for implementing lifelong learning as a goal to foster democratic opportunities that would help to promote equality between nations and foster world-wide development. Increasingly, however, education is being used to broaden rather than diminish the chasm between North and South. As a more recent UNESCO report notes, education is increasingly becoming a means to widen, rather than narrow the gap between rich and poor nations (Delors, 1996). Nationalistic discourses advocate the expansion of educational programs primarily to ensure that industrialized nations will be able to retain a superior competitive position in an increasingly cut-throat globalized marketplace, thus undermining democratic and egalitarian ideals in education.

But what if adult educators were to challenge this current focus in adult education, to question the market-directed agenda, to foster an alternative and more inclusive vision of the purposes of education? What if the focus of adult education was on enhancing production for life rather than production for profit (Hart, 1992)?

To examine these possibilities, we first need to name and critique the dominant marketplace discourse in education. We need to see how pervasive the language of the marketplace is, and to understand how it reframes our ideological construction of education. When we refer to students as "clients" and "consumers", and worry about developing glossy promotional materials for programs, it changes the way we view education (Barret, 1996). A narrow, competitive focus on the "bottom line" develops that undermines the broader emancipatory potential for adult education, blinding many of us to alternative discourses and perspectives.

Communicative Action and Civil Society

A number of critical educational theorists have drawn upon the work of Jurgen Habermas, both to critique this narrow technical-rational approach to education, and to examine possibilities for a communicative form of learning. Habermas's work draws upon a broad European theoretical tradition to develop a critique of modern society and suggestions for how the development of communicative action to lead to a renewal of civil society may provide some an alternative prospectus for the development of modern society.

Habermas (1987, 1996) argues that with the advent of modernity, traditional forms of communication weakened as the system (the political-economic sector) became increasingly disengaged from the lifeworld (family, community, and church). As the system has grown in size and power, the lifeworld, which has traditionally served as the realm in which moral and ethical decisions are communicatively determined, has been undermined. The pervasive controlling influence of the system has encroached upon lifeworld preserves, creating pathologies that we can see in weakened moral structures. In the face of these changes, technical-rationality, a means-end type of approach, had gained dominance. Decisions about governance are made in such a way that the values traditionally upheld in the realm of the lifeworld are rendered irrelevant.

Critical adult educators have seen that this comprehensive model of the effects of modernity can tell us much about the current marketplace orientation in adult education. Welton argues that "Habermas' famous metaphor - the "colinization of the lifeworld" is constructed to both capture the deformations of late capitalist societies and to identify the critical learning potential of our present moment" (1995, p. 143). Habermas' argument is that the lifeworld has been "colonized" by the system, so that the technical-rational interests of the marketplace (system) encroach upon the values and beliefs traditionally held in the home and community (lifeworld). Examples of this same colinization process can be seen in the adult education field through the broad acceptance of a marketplace mandated agenda. Programs that are designed primarily with employers' interests in mind, such as competency-based training programs, define "useful knowledge in the light of bureaucratic and corporate needs" (Collins, 1991, p. 45).

To reassert lifeworld values, such as equity and justice, we can draw upon Habermas' theory of communicative action to focus on the potential for building civil society. In doing so, we may be able shore up the defenses of the lifeworld to create a new, critical focus for adult educators. Welton argues that "the *core values* of adult education are most compatible with a *discoursive* understanding of democracy" (1997, p. 215). Communicative action entails creating spaces for open and empathetic discussions to lead to a more democratic form of learning. By building civil society, as a sphere where common citizens can come together to voice their concerns and initiate changes, adult education may be able to recapture the fundamental lifeworld values that are often lost in educational discourses characterized by a marketplace agenda.

While critical theorists have been able to uncover many of the limitations of a marketplace discourse in education, many feminists argue that their critique of instrumental rationality is a critique of values that have been privileged within a masculine, rather than a feminine discourse (Gore, 1992; Luke, 1993). The "system" that Habermas talks about did not come into existence independently. It emerged from a lifeworld already tainted with patriarchal values. The marketplace orientation that places supremacy on profits over life, and reinforces competition over cooperation, is a reflection of male values that are characterized by aggression and mastery (Hart, 1992).

I argue that the failure of critical theorists to recognize that their critique of the system is also a critique of primarily masculinist values, can be seen in the way the concept of the "lifeworld" has been idealized. Rather than explaining pathologies in the lifeworld as being caused solely by negative influences from the system, I believe that the system has reinforced lifeworld inequalities in power to create a structure that is based upon alienation and domination. As a consequence, critical theorists can only offer a limited critique that fails to expose why the competitive, market-driven, technical-rational approach to education is so pervasive. To widen the focus of analysis, I propose a critical feminist analysis that examines the homeplace and its connections to adult education.

The Homeplace

The homeplace is an important site of the lifeworld. It is a centre for identity formation, relationships, and labour. The homeplace can be seen as both an abstract theoretical construct, and a concrete, everyday lived experience (Gouthro, 1998). It may go beyond the individual to encompass a larger sense of community (hooks, 1990). The homeplace is both a site of liberation and a site of domination, where women have struggled to be free of patriarchal power, and where they have worked to shape their own lives and those of their families. The homeplace is central to determining the quality of learning experiences, particularly for women.

Feminists have long noted the importance of family and home in the lives of most women. It is within the home that women's sense of self is initially formed, in ways that may have a profound effect on later learning experiences (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986). Individual sense of identity is sometimes diminished by the nearly invisible role women occupy within the homeplace, where the woman comes think of herself only in relationship to another - as a wife, as a mother, as a daughter. The low evaluation of the status of women in the home means that education is often seen as an escape from this limiting perception of self (Fagan, 1991; Cox & Pascall, 1994).

Relationships in the homeplace can serve as either an important forum for learning, or as a strong barrier to women's learning experiences. Many women speak of the positive influence of their mothers, and the pride that they feel in setting an example for their children in pursuing their education. At the same time, power is linked with knowledge. Some women face ridicule, sabotage, and even violence from male partners who may be resistant to having their partners continue their schooling (Campbell, 1993). To continue their education, many women overcome tremendous obstacles, juggling huge workloads and sacrificing their personal time. Minority women face dual barriers of discrimination (hooks, 1990; Johnson-Baily & Cervero, 1996). The belief that women are ultimately responsible for everything that happens in the homeplace is a deeply embedded social concept, thus creating a struggle as women strive to fulfil the demands of two competing, "greedy" institutions - the homeplace and academia (Edwards, 1993).

The homeplace has often been portrayed as a place of rest and retreat, but for most women it is a site of labour that is physically, mentally, and psychologically demanding. Despite societal devaluation of its worth, many women feel that their work in the home has merit (Fagan, 1991). When women's labour is diverted from the homeplace to other areas, however, it can be a source of tension and conflict (Luxton, Rosenberg & Arat-Koc, 1990; Campbell, 1993).

By examining the homeplace and its connections to adult education, we start to gain insights into the complex structure of the lifeworld. The critical theory of Jurgen Habermas tends to idealize the lifeworld as a harmonious sphere in which decisions are communicatively formulated. The tensions and pathologies of the lifeworld are blamed upon the detrimental influence of the system. From a feminist perspective, however, it becomes clear that the homeplace, as a central component of the lifeworld, has always been a complex site where pathologies already exist in the form of patriarchal power.

Critical theorists challenge the marketplace values of the system that emphasize a technical-rational approach to education, arguing that the lifeworld needs to be shored up against the encroaching influence of the system (Welton, 1995). I believe that we can better critique the "system" if we examine how it emanated originally from the lifeworld. Nancy Fraser (1995) makes the valuable point, supported also by Cohen & Arato (1992), that Habermas should not limit his discussion of power to focus upon bureaucratic power, but should also address patriarchal power. In doing so, we question the underlying value structure of both system and lifeworld, recognizing the complexity and problematic aspects of both spheres of influence on our society today.

Developing A Critical Feminist Approach to Adult Education

I believe that feminist discourses can offer an alternative, more holistic perspective that can serve to challenge the dominant discourse in adult education which focuses on the demands of the globalized capitalism. The marketplace orientation of current discourses in adult education are a reflection of primarily masculine values that stress competition over cooperation, dominance over mutuality. While male experience has often given priority to a singular focus and commitment to the workplace, women's lives are almost always complex and multi-faceted (Bateson, 1989). Harding (1993) argues the value of standpoint epistemology is that people situated in the margins are often privileged in being able to critique the mainstream. Women's perspectives may be better suited to challenge the predominance of the marketplace, as it does not always assume priority in their lives. The stories of adult women learners indicate that their learning experiences are often interconnected with others, both in their homeplace, and their communities (Campbell, 1993; Edwards, 1993).

I believe that learning should be connected to the lived, everyday experiences that all men and women experience. The breakdown in linkages between system and lifeworld has suggested that we need to forge new means of communication and develop a broader conceptualization of reason. Like Habermas, Sara Ruddick (1989) suggests that our society's concept of reason is often a very limited perspective. While Habermas (1987) develops a more abstract conceptualization of broadening our notion of reason to encompass humanistic and critical capacities as well as technical-rational approaches, she discusses a practical, emotive form of reasoning linked with the types of learning generated through mothering. This kind of reasoning in attuned to the needs of others and the complexities of relationships. She argues that in mothering, women develop a form of reflection in which they constantly question the purpose of their actions, the reasons for their decisions, and the end result of their labours. She writes, "this simulataneous, or at least rapidly shifting, double focus on small and great, near and eternal, characteristically marks their maternal vision" (1989, p. 78).

Hart (1992, 1997) questions whether our understanding of the notion of good, meaningful work can be understood only in capitalist, marketplace terms that undermine the value of subsistence forms of labour such as motherwork. She proposes an alternative focus for educators that draws an analogy to motherwork, arguing that we should develop "a holistic mindset and a holistic practical approach" to education that will lead to "a life-affirming perspective to guide our educational orientation and the way we think, feel, and act as educators" (1997, p. 133).

These feminist theorists challenge educators to broaden their understanding of the purposes of adult education to develop a more life-affirming approach (Miles, 1996, Hart, 1997). If educators were to develop a more holistic perception of education, that examined the implications of education in all facets of learners' lives, they would be forced to examine broader issues such as equity and sustainability. In addition to examining distortions in power created by money and political power, they would also be forced to examine other inequalities such as that created by patriarchal forms of power.

Currently, adult education often perpetuates a schism between women's everyday lived experiences and formal education (Edwards, 1993; Johnson-Baily& Cervero, 1996). The types of learning that would be more inclusive of women's perspectives would encourage the development of opportunities for students to reflect upon their life experiences and how these connect to more abstract forms of educational learning. Women generally favour connected forms of learning (Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Baxter-Magolda, 1992). Litner, Rossiter & Taylor (1992) argue for the development of a critical feminist approach to teaching that encourages discourse and affirms personal life experience.

Examining the significance of the homeplace in the lives of adult learners would broaden our perception of the purposes and meaning of adult education. It would affirm the potential of adult education to be a communicative, cooperative process that enriches the lives and broadens the horizons of the participants. Gendered differences in experience, and the diversity of minorities who engage in adult education would be better respected and understood if we were to acknowledge the links to the situated experience of each unique, individual learner.

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The Strategies of Successful American Indian and Native Learners in the Adult Higher Educational Environment

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Abstract: In spite of the numerous barriers and obstacles placed before them, many Native learners, by employing a variety of learning techniques and coping strategies, have been extremely successful in western higher education and have gone on to have successful undergraduate careers by completing their bachelor's degrees. The purpose of this research effort was understand how Native learners had come to succeed in the post secondary environment, from their perspective.

Introduction

The primary interest of the study was to explore and examine the learning techniques that American Indian learners used as a part of experiences in higher education and the factors that they individually believed contributed to their success as Native learners. This was a qualitative research study that sought to understand the meaning that Native learners made of their world through their life experience,therefore the use of in-depth one-on-one personal interviews and dialogue-centered focus groups provided the thick, rich descriptive narratives needed to provide the insightful details into why Native learners saw themselves as successful graduates and what factors they contributed to those successes. A profile of the participants is provided here as a way to provide the reader with some background on each participant. Basically, the study included 7 women and 5 men ranging in age from 25 to 50 years old. There were 14 tribal affiliations represented among the 12 participants who also held a 16 undergraduate degrees some included Business Administration, Physical Science, Native American Studies and a variety of other Liberal Arts degrees, Political Science, Biology, Law and Social Work. All of the participants were active in some form within the Native Community, seven worked directly for a tribe and the other five who didn't were active in some other Indian organization or practice. Pseudonyms were chosen by each participant to ensure confidentiality.

While there are numerous studies conducted in Indian Education (Almeida, 1996; Bordeaux, 1995; Cline, 1997) most of that research is conducted on K-12 grade level populations. In contrast to K-12 education, there has been very little research done on Native Americans in higher education. Studies and writings conducted about Indian adult education (Adams, 1995; Churchill, 1992; Deloria, 1969 ,1988; Jaimes, 1992, St.Pierre, 1997) uncovered data similar to the Johnson-Bailey & Cervero (1996) study which revealed that marginalized populations are underrepresented in academic research. The Johnson-Bailey & Cervero study explored issues facing black women in reentry programs and pointed out that the needs of Black women go unstudied and unresearched and their specific and individual needs remain unaddressed in adult education. This same issue exists with research conducted on American Indian populations in higher education in that issues facing Native America today are, for the most part, unresearched and unstudied leaving the social, political and educational needs of the American Indian populations unaddressed.

Recent figures (1997) provided by the Washington States Governor's Office on Indian Policy indicate that less than 2% of all those who attended community colleges in the state were Native American and that only .08 of all those attending graduate programs were Native American. Bureau of Indian Affairs statistics also reflected problems with the participation rate of American Indian populations in higher educational programs nationally. At the time of the 1990 census, figures indicated that 51% of all American Indians finish high school, 24% of all American Indians attend college, and of those American Indians who attend college only 3% actually graduate from college. Only 1% of all American Indians attend graduate school, .05 graduate from Masters programs, and no data exist to indicate that significant numbers of American Indians either attempt to or obtain doctoral degrees. In order to fully understand how some Indians view formal education in America, as well as why participations rates in higher education remain low among adult Indian populations, educators may need to know and thus come to grips with the power of the negative historical legacy of Indian education in America. Evidence that Indian Education in American is rooted in policies aimed at extinction can be found throughout the literature addressing Indian educational issues (Adams, 1995; Churchill, 1992; Cook-Lynn, 1996; Deloria, 1969 ,1988 ,1991; Matthiessen, 1983). A painful and bitter look into the history of Indian Education in America is read, by many (Adams, 1995; Churchill, 1992; Deloria, 1969 ,1988; Jaimes, 1992) as a litany of madness propagated by a set of federal policies bent on the destruction of an entire race of people whose practitioners include politicians, policy makers and American Presidents. It could be suggested that this litany has had an undeniable role in setting the tragic course of history which has witnessed the development of federal policy as the tool for forced assimilation and, at its worst, as a weapon for the extinction of Indian peoples; The lack of participation of American Indians in higher education can be defined as problematic and can be traced to several factors.

This study sought to uncover what were some of the barriers that contributed to low participation rate of American Indians in adult higher by addressing the problem from the perspective of Native learners who employed specific strategies to overcome the barriers that blocked or hindered their participation in higher education.

Findings

In analyzing the data from the study, I specifically wanted to know what contributed to the participants' success and what they identified as the specific issues that stood in their way or otherwise acted as obstacles or barriers which they had to overcome in order to be successful in their higher educational careers. In regard to the barriers, there were four main issue or categories that the participants identified. These focused on dealing with isolation, cycles of abuse and violence, overcoming stigmas and stereotypes placed on them by both the Indian and non-Indian community, and dealing with limited resources both financial and skilled-based.

The strategies that these participants used to overcome their barriers and to become successful in the higher educational setting included: Establishing cross-cultural mentoring relationships, creating Native American based support systems, determination motivated by the need to give back to community and recognizing the significance of spiritual dimensions in their lives in higher education. The four key barriers and obstacles found in this study are discussion below.

Isolation On Campus and the Clash of Cultures. Isolation was identified by many of the participants as a source of frustration and loneliness that distracted them to the point where significant energy had to be spent "fighting off" its unbalancing effects. Isolation was generated by a lack of connection to the college environment and being removed from the home community. Many participants reported feeling overwhelmed by the size of "things" like the number of people at college and how those people seemed to be distant from each other. As one of the study participants, DH, pointed out, "I never felt like I fit into the routine at college. Its not like I felt people didn't like me; I knew people but so many people would walk around the campus and never say a word to other people. Maybe I felt alone because I knew this place wasn't home for me."

Isolation as a part of Indian higher education was defined by many in the study as "being the outsider." Some of the participants defined being an "outsider" as something related to being disconnected from their culture, DH described it like this in her interview, "I just never fit into that whole college thing, in a frat house mode with clubs or groups. People were nice and I got along but I never saw another Indian on campus and the reservation is just 40 miles away. And as far as relating to the curriculum that was being taught, if Indians were mentioned it was like we were some place in the past."

Most of the participants agreed that their college experience was not culturally relevant to them and that this was a factor in their feelings of isolation. However data from the interviews showed that most of the participants were not expecting a culturally connected experience from their college careers. This issues was also revealed in the the study's focus group session when the participants were asked about the relevance of culture in their college experience and the room went silent. A few people looked around at each other and few shrugged their shoulders as one participant spoke out and said, "I didn't expect it to be." The other participants nodded in agreement. "College was about learning the system's way not the Indian way."

Legacy of Abuse, Violence and Dysfunction. Many of the participants identified a need to overcome an abuse mentality. An abuse mentality was described as an inner struggle to eradicate a poor self image bought on by years of family violence, substance abuse and deep seeded negative stereotypes about Indian people as a whole, such as the "poor Indian", the "drunk Indian" and the "defeated Indian." The results of an abuse mentality are manifested in distorted ways of thinking. For example, as study participant Lucy shared, "Its a defeatist way of thinking. Like saying, 'I don't know how to do something so I can't do it.' It's like making up excuses not to be successful." Another participant, Winn, recognized this in herself when she said, "I set myself up for failure by repeating poor cycles of behavior. I grew up in dysfunction and I married someone who keeps that dysfunction going. I am educated I should know better." Study participant Punky described the abuse mentality as wallowing in one's own defeat;

> If you stay there, trapped up in a cycle of drugs and alcohol it will become who you are and every time you try to get ahead and do good for yourself you will have to peel the defeat off yourself like a skin. Pretty soon you're are so busy peeling skin that you forget what the good thing that you were trying to do was. Being stuck in the cycle of abuse, drugs, alcohol means you have to fight to overcome the stereotype you helped create.

In other words, the abuse mentality is the place an individual arrives when they have been victimized either emotionally, physically, mentally or spiritually so often that they seldom know any other way to respond to the world around them as anything other than a victim. The see them self as a a person who somehow must "deserve" this type of treatment from others and they learn to conduct themselves accordingly.

The Double Stigma of Living in Two Worlds. The struggle to overcome negative perceptions from within the Indian community was describe by many in the study as personally painful and challenging. It was the belief of the participants that the negativity was generated because of the participants' involvement in higher education. Winn captured the essence of this dilemma during her interview when she made this observation;

> It's like being pulled in two different directions. White people didn't fully except me because maybe they felt I didn't belong. They 'd make comments like, 'It must be really hard on you to be here.' And then it was like Indian people would make comments to the effect that more educated I became the less Indian I was.

The double stigma was described by Lucy as a clash between wanting to better herself economically and being seen as a "sell-out" to the Indian community. This characterization was shared by most other participants who described the stigma as having to live in a place--both the Indian and non-Indian world--where you are not fully accepted by either. A Lucy noted, "You are either a hang-around-the-Soldier fort sell out with some of the Indians or you are a poor, dumb drunk Indian to the whites. It's hard to concentrate on what you're suppose to when you have all this pressure on you."

Limited Knowledge and Resources and the Culture of Power. Limited resources in this study broke out into two different ways. One way focused on the issues of time and money. For example, a lack of time for work and school and, in some cases, family caused feelings of unbalance and stress for the participants. The lack money and financial availability for school tuition and supplies, lack of physical support for things like child care, transportation and daily living expenses were also limiting factors that had negative effects on the health and general well-being of the participants. The lack of these resources while especially problematic for all communities of color, is not unique to the Indian experience.

More unique to the Indian struggle in higher education is the second issue in this category which includes the additional factor that participants identified as the "lack of skills" and knowledge of the larger society's, white society's, rules, systems and ways of doing things. What the participants in the study called "the rules of engagement", "the rules of the game" or the "access to power" is what Lisa Delpit (1995) calls the "culture of power" and this study bares out that a lack of understanding of the rules, systems and structures of the dominate society can be a serious obstacle for Native learners.

In her interview, Lucy identified feeling at a loss on how to best plan and prepare for getting her degree. She talked about how she felt that there was something that someone wasn't telling her and that if they had she could have advanced in her career more easily, "During my under grad work, especially during advising times and counselors weren't available, I felt like I was playing a game and I was unaware of the rules. This was a definite barrier to my education. I felt like I wasted a lot of time that I didn't have to if some one would have just cued me in the right direction."

Study participant, Sky, had a point of view similar to that of Lucy's. Sky however, identified issues of power, or the lack there of, as obstacles to her success as a Native woman learner, "This wasn't just about going to school and getting good grades. There was something else going on--it was about access to people and places. Success was about power--white students have power because they have access."

A member of the study, "RS", summed this issues of power and resources up during his interview with his remarks about knowing how to obtain power;

> You can obtain power when you can find access to resources, people who can help you, listen to you, give you guidance and feedback, and help you network with people. The big schools want to keep that a secret it seems but there are good people out there who really want to help, but you have to be willing to seek them out and stay on them until they help and they will--they love persistence. You see because 'Joe White Kid' knows where the door to power is. His skin color gives him a map and a key. Those of us limited by lack of access must steal the map and bust the door down if we want in to the halls of power.

Strategies employed by successful Native learners. The experiences of the participants helped them to develop a series of strategies that ultimately led to their success as Native learners. Pivotal to this study and key to its purpose statement were the answers given, by the participants, to the the question, "What strategies did you employ to be a successful Native learner?" The findings bare out a unique mix of strategies employed by the Native Learners of this study and are discussed below.

Establishing Cross-Cultural Mentoring Relationships. Fundamental to the success of nearly every participant in this study was their ability to seek out and find a caring mentor, regardless of race or gender. As Punky put it, "I made it a point that they [instructors and counselors] know me. That they know me, personally. . . I was not afraid to utilize the counselors that were available." The overwhelming number of participants used instructors, college staff, members of their tribe who had already earned an undergraduate degree or tribal Elders as mentors for whom they looked to for guidance, support and critical feedback. The participants defined these relationships as critical to there overall success. As Bee described it, "I just needed someone to talk to and share how I was feeling that day and who would listen and encourage me."Punky reiterated this point when he commented "I think the Associate Dean had a major impact on me. He pushed me when I needed it the most, our relationship was kind of a mentorship. He kept emphasizing upon me to continue my education, he still does it today." Study member Kioby spoke of having a group of mentors who would be there for him at different times. His mentors were not necessarily people he saw all the time, some lived far away from where he went to school. However, he had establish a solid foundation with many of his supporters so that he could call upon all of them at any time, "In a sense mentors for me were my calls back to South Dakota. Calling the old people that I knew back home and asking them, 'Hey, this is what I am doing what do you think?' And they would give me advice."

In this study mentors were seen as vital resources, the human road maps that helped guide and direct students through and around the maze that sometime is higher education. However, as demonstrated Bee and RS sometime mentors are not always where you might look or what you might expect. This is further illustrated by the story of Bee and RS. Bee, a normally quiet somewhat reserved person, ended up choosing to be mentored by an out spoken, animated, social activist lesbian. Bee was drawn to her mentor's conviction to justice and hard work. Furthermore Bee was drawn to the idea that if this out loud lesbian could be successful in her field, with the negative social stigma attached to her sexual orientation, then so could she--a shy, yet determined, Indian woman back in school after an six year lay off. Bee reflected on the situation, "I didn't know she was a lesbian and when I found out I didn't care. She was an inspiration to watch in the classroom. Her help, gentle wisdom and criticism developed the student in me that I always knew I could be. Our relationship was a keystone to my success."

By contrast, RS was an outgoing rather verbose young man that ended up being mentored by a very quiet, very reserved, almost stiff Asian ecology professor. RS described that, at times, culture and language were impediments to communications, but each saw thoughtful and contemplative traits that they admired in each other. "He reminded me of an Indian elder, purposeful in his actions and careful with his words. He would always listen to everything I said and then if I asked he would provide me with feedback. With my mentor you had to ask for comment or he would just listen and then thank you for sharing."

Creating Native American -Based Support Systems. "I went to State College because of the other Native people. I wanted to be around them." Kioby's statement is indicative of every participant in this study. Throughout the interview conversations, in analyzing the interview transcripts and as a central discussion of the focus group, the significance of the role of other Native learners in the success of the participants of this study was the single most discussed theme. Multiple reasons are given for this from issues of support, friendship and camaraderie, to a sense of connection to home and the Native community, to knowing someone who could understand how it felt to be an Indian in college to someone to simply have good times with. Joyce, a graduate of Berkeley, grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area surrounded by a thriving and active urban Indian community. So it does not come as a surprise that she found other supportive Native learners as important element to her success in higher education. "Yes, other Indians made things more comfortable, more real. It made the learning more genuine. It didn't make studying any easier but it gave me a sense of strong community and a connection to who I was and to the Native community in San Francisco."

Timothy held the same belief as Joyce about the importance of other Native learners, "Having other Indian people to be with is always good it keeps you on balance. You know because you have others to share things in common." And finally, Jeff summarized the thoughts of most of the participants when he noted, "Sometimes it is important to have like-minded people to hang out with and be social. The stress of being a student and living everyday fades in the glow of good company. Other Natives are like that, good company."

Determination Motivated by the Need to Give Back to Community. Determination was an essential element in the success of most of the participants. Most of the participants viewed their determination as being driven by their motivation to return to their Indian community and do good by helping to create positive change. Not enough emphasis can be placed on the importance of the raw dogged determination expressed and demonstrated by the participants of this study, as Punky put it, "No matter how hard it gets, don't quit. Don't ever quit! Never quit!" Participant determination was driven by the desire to succeed in college by graduating with their degrees. However, their desire to succeed, as the participants explained, was driven by their desire to give back to their community. Possibly unique to the definition of success as ex- pressed by the participants, is the notion that success to the Native learner in seen in terms of the collective and not only the individual. Winn expressed this, "I consider myself successful when I can set a goal and I achieve it. My goal is to help Indian people, especially the youth. That is why I teach. In order to be successful, you have reach the goal and that means you can never give up on your goals and that takes determination." RS said during his interview, " I think Native people view success differently. Some people view success as what they can get for themselves and so do Indians but we add the dynamic of success being a vehicle to help home community by giving back."

The Significance of spiritual Dimensions in Higher Education. The role of spirituality was seen as pivotal by the participants in that it provided them with various options for becoming and maintaining their selves as successful learners. The participants viewed the use of ceremony as a vehicle for academic and personal guidance. Spirituality was viewed as a way to gain emotional strength and grounding and as a way to keep students connected to their culture, which helped them fight feelings of isolation. A key factor of the significance of spiritual dimensions in higher education as viewed, by the participants, was the role of spirituality in helping Native learners overcome self doubt and academic problems.

A majority of the participants spoke of the value that Indian tradition and culture added to their success as learners. The participants reflected upon, in their interviews, how their sense of spirit connected them to their heritage and provided them with inner strength, guidance and perspective. Punky made this point during his interview, "My spiritual journey helped my education. This was the way I ground myself so that I could go on when things got tough. Always remember the Creator only gives you what you can handle on that day."

Susan explained in her interview that spirituality was so much a part of who she was that it was "just natural" to pray and seek guidance and that brought her success in and out of school, "I value my traditional teachings. The ways of our people. I have been taught this was for all my life to pray and seek guidance it was really just natural to me to use what I had been taught when I needed it in life."DH explained that her spirituality was something she saw as useful and needed but as some thing she needed to get back in touch with, "I think spirituality is important but I need to get more tied to my traditional Indian roots because I want that perspective in my life." Timothy added that spiritual dimensions helped connect him to his heritage, "To pray is good, oh yes. The spiritual side reminds us where we come from. They use to beat us Indian kids in boarding school for praying our way but it connected us to who we were, our deep in bedded culture and our heritage as Indian people."

While the spiritual tradition of each of the participants varied from traditional Indian to more western-centered customs, the role and significance of this dynamic can not be dismissed. This study ultimately found that the role of spiritual dimensions in Indian higher education play as key a role in the success of Native learners as does having their tuition paid for them.

Implications and Conclusion

The value of this study in relation to the literature on Indian Higher Education is that it contributes a data-based empirical study to the body of literature on Indian Higher Education. This contribution is even more significant when it is understood that the majority of scholarly writings in Indian Higher Education are conceptual pieces. Furthermore this study affirms the St. Pierre study (1997) and the value of Tribal colleges on reservation based communities. This study supports the contribution of Delpit's theory of the "culture of power" and it implications for Indian learners in higher education.

Additionally, this study's contribution rest in the finding that many of the Native learners felt that college wasn't "about them" from a cultural perspective.Therefore, after analyzing and synthesizing the data of this study, it became understandably clear that there is a need in Indian Higher Education to develop more culturally relevant curriculum. The need to assess the broadening of Indian educational opportunities not only for urban Indians but for Native learner wishing to seek bachelor's and Master's degrees not, yet offered by tribal colleges is a critical finding of this study. So is the need to develop Indian studies programs and educational curricula that are culturally relevant to the Indian learner.

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Why Adult Educators Should be Concerned with Civil Society

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Abstract: The concept of civil society has gained currency over the past twenty-five years. This paper provides a local, national and global perspective of civil society, identifies the types of organizational forms found within it, and explores the role of adult educators and adult education in shaping it.

Introduction

The concept of civil society, an idea rooted in classic philosophical thought, has resurfaced across the academic disciplines as well as across the continents with a veritable tour de force that cannot be ignored. The characteristics and nature of civil society vary by degrees among communities and countries dependent upon the cultural, economic, historical, political, and social traditions held by each. There is broad, consensual agreement that civil society is represented by organizations, actions, and relationships peculiar to and different from those of political society (the state) and economic society (the market).

Voluntary organizations (typically identified with civil society) in the North American, Western, Central, and Eastern European contexts have a long history of providing adult education opportunities for the general population. Likewise, there is almost universal agreement among adult educators that participation in voluntary organizations provides unlimited opportunities for informal learning and serves an important socialization function. Of particular significance is the argument that participation in voluntary organizations often precedes increased interest and activity in society as a whole. In effect, it is argued that participation in voluntary organizations "teaches" democracy or democratic behavior.

This paper provides a local, national and global perspective of civil society, identifies the types of organizational forms found within it, and explores the role of adult educators and adult education in shaping it.

The Local Perspective

Civil society has recently become the central focus of the debates regarding the perceived decline of American society. It is argued that civil society must be strong for democracy to prevail, economy to grow and social problems to be resolved. The current social disarray is primarily seen as the result of the weakening of civil society.

Pressed for more details regarding the occupants of the space of civil society, Americans first point toward the associations described by Tocqueville in *Democracy in America* - those small local citizen organizations that appeared so central to the newly forming democracy that he observed.

Today, however, we usually add not-for-profit organizations to the space of civil society recognizing that some associations created or became not-for-profit institutions, a form of organization that has become almost synonymous with civil society. However, they are significantly different than associations and the two should not be grouped together as civil society organizations. In fact, not-for-profit institutions are distinctive forms that are in contra-distinction to their associational progenitors.

The not-for-profit corporation is radically different from associations in structure, sources of authority, incentives and knowledge base. For example:

- Associations tend to be informal and horizontal. Not-for-profit corporations are usually formal and hierarchical.
- Not-for-profits are legally controlled by a few. Associations are activated by the consent of each participant.
- Associational participants are motivated by diverse incentives other than pay. Not-for-profit employees are provided paid incentives.
- Associations generally use the experience and knowledge of member citizens to perform their functions. Not-for-profits use the special knowledge of professionals and experts to perform their functions.

Further not-for-profit institutions, whether a hospital, university or child welfare agency has taken on the basic form of institutions of industrial production or public bureaucracies with presidents, chief executives, deputies, department heads, bureau chiefs on down to front line producers.

While associations vary greatly in scale, they have at least twelve distinct attributes that help us recognize their distinction from government, business and not-for-profit institutions.

- First, associations are groups of citizens pulled together by common consent. This consent is based upon a mutual concern or interest.

- Second, local associations can not only provide daily caring support, they also have unique capacities to respond in times of great stress and crisis.

- Third, in a mass society we recognize the critical need for individual responses to individual dilemmas.

- Fourth, associations provide a collective form of problem solving.

- Fifth, solutions are based on personal experience and common sense and serve as a counter balance or alternative to the narrow world of technical answers.

- Sixth, associations provide citizens one of the two means by which they can use their political power in a democracy. By voting, citizens delegate power, in associations, citizens make power.

- Seventh, community associations proliferate to incorporate people of all conditions, capacities and interests.

- Eighth, America's great space for leadership development is in associational life.

- Ninth, associations provide a vital mediating function in societies dominated by institutions.

- Tenth, recent research suggests that a rich network of local associations is the nest from which enterprises grow.

- Eleventh, associations provide the basic context for the formation and expression of citizen opinions and values.

- Twelfth, associations are historically the seed bed form which the more formalized systems grow.

Today we are facing the limits of many of our aging traditional institutions. Large city schools seem unable to educate effectively. Criminal justice systems fail to reform. Welfare systems fail to support people who become productive citizens. Medical systems contribute very little to the public health. In the face of these limits we are investing incredible technical and financial resources in institutional reform that has had quite limited effect.

At the same time, our associations are hard at work inventing alternative and effective forms that still "elude the observations" of policymakers. We see a multitude of local community initiatives to create new educational forms or appropriate new schools. Associational efforts to provide alternatives for youth have proliferated across the nation. Church and other associational initiatives are creating new approaches to introducing and supporting marginalized people as productive citizens. Local "healthy community" initiatives are creating effective means of actually improving health status.

What has most clearly "eluded" many institutional reformers is the fact that the old systems may now be inappropriate. In many cases, the ability to "observe" the associational inventions may suggest the form of new institutions rather than the reform of outdated structures.

The National Perspective

The national perspective carries forward McKnight's theme concerning the characteristics and qualities of not-for-profit institutions from a national level, that of Hungary. Hungary is a particularly interesting case for several reasons. First, Hungary is a dynamic example of how civil society develops as it transitions from a socialist system to one that is more democratic. Second, since the fall of the Berlin Wall, the number of not-for-profit organizations in Hungary has exploded, now totaling some 50,000 new registered entities. And finally, Hungarians point to the phenomenal growth of not-for-profit organizations as an indication that they are reclaiming their traditionally strong and vibrant civil society.

One of the questions raised by McKnight is whether the institutional form of not-for-profit organizations, characterized by bureaucracy, administrative staff, and professional expertise, accurately reflect a unique social realm significantly different than market and government organizations. Or, as he argues, have these institutional forms of civil society organizations adopted a structure and form that no longer makes them vehicles for citizen participation, democratic communication, and learning democracy, both nonformally and informally.

The Hungarian situation is critiqued from three vantage points: the discourse of deficiency and the role of intellectuals; professionalization; and not-for-profit management. Recommendations to support the democratic ideal of civil society are then made.

Hungarian adult educators often adhere to a well-known and established philosophy of adult education that focuses attention on the individual. The social, economic and political context are taken-for-granted realities which call upon individuals to adapt to the system. Such an approach to adult education diagnoses individuals as deficient of the adaptability and coping skills requisite to existence in a rapidly changing environment. One particular adult education model assumed a pyramid shape based on a series of categorized individual and community deficiencies starting at the base with the "lack of confidence" proceeding upward with the "lack of personal connection, lack of cooperation, lack of knowledge and information, and lack of capital." Someone else identified "lack of self-esteem" as an even broader based problem than "lack of confidence."

Supporting this model of adult education are adult educators and voluntary organization leaders, self identified "intellectuals", who "are not peasants and not workers." These "'real' intellectuals are absolutely liberal and independent and are floating between the powers." These characteristics define what Gramsci named the "conservative intellectual", one whom supports rather than challenges the status quo.

Coinciding with the discourse of deficiency is a trend towards the professionalization and bureaucratization of voluntary organizations indicated at the most practical level by the uncritical adoption of nonprofit management training programs. Weber's theory of social organization is useful in a discussion of this trend because he identified "associations" as a basic category of social organization. Further, he argues that associations are always to some extent authoritarian in virtue of having an executive staff," volunteer or paid.

As early as 1991, Hungarian international financier George Soros claimed "we must abandon the spirit of volunteerism that characterized the foundations in their heyday and replace it by professionalism." Many others stand with Soros in the quest for professionalism in Hungarian voluntary organizations. It is generally accepted that professionalization of a certain field rests upon two major characteristics: 1) the identification of a specialized body of knowledge; and 2) the training of practitioners. The professions themselves are constructed upon a market model characterized by the exchange of fees for service.

The proliferation in Budapest of Western-funded voluntary organization management training programs designed to develop a cadre of executive and administrative staff places nascent organizations at risk of succumbing to authoritarian practices. Second, the leaders of Hungary's current transformation claim the goal of the institutionalization of the democratic ideal which, in the best case scenario, would be evident in the organizations in which individuals participate. The associational authoritarianism suggested by Weber challenges this ideal within the very organizations which are sentimentally referred to in Hungary as "small circles of freedom." What began in Hungary as the spontaneous association of a few people, "like in the fairy tales," is encountering well-planned programs laden with technical skills grounded in the "cult of efficiency."

To counteract the trends described above, it is recommended that we adopt practices that incorporate the following concepts: an asset versus needs approach; a transformative practice of adult education; democratic communication; and radical intellectualism. By doing so, the perspective shifts from the individual to the wider social context. For example, Kretzmann and McKnight argue that "the needs-based strategy can guarantee only survival, and can never lead to serious change or community development, this orientation must be regarded as one of the major causes of the sense of hopelessness that pervades discussions about the future..." (1993, 5).

Second, appropriate as a foil against the bureaucratic trend is transformative adult education such as Freire's theory of conscientization. According to Freire, conscientization is "a force countering the bureaucracy, which threatens to deaden the revolutionary vision and dominate the people in the very name of their freedom" (1985, 87). The bureaucracy of the previous regime in Hungary is legendary. Professionalization of the voluntary sector and civil society suggests, among other things, a trend towards bureaucratization which deserves attention. Care must be taken to avoid swapping one bureaucracy for another.

Third, the notion that individuals can learn democracy through participation in voluntary organizations can be well-informed by Habermas's concept of the "ideal speech situation." The "ideal speech situation" seeks to "institutionalize discourse or critique systematically distorted communication" (McCarthy, 1975, xvii). Based on the democratic ideal, discourse acknowledges each individual's right and capacity to communicate rendering bureaucratization, professionalization, and rigid control of communication problematic. Considering the nonprofit management trend towards the use of such business tools as strategic planning, the "ideal speech situation" offers a protective mechanism to safeguard the voluntary sector from technocrats and bureaucrats.

And finally, instead of viewing a certain class of individuals as "intellectuals," a Gramscian approach would consider all people intellectuals. "Conservative intellectuals" support the status quo, perpetuate the social reproduction of the values of the dominant class, and focus on individual deficiencies. On the contrary, radical intellectuals challenge the status quo and view individuals within their social context.

As such, a radical intellectual would shun the discourse of deficiency, question the "market thinking" which underlies much of the nonprofit management training curriculum and question this curriculum's appropriateness for use in voluntary organizations, and look critically at the hierarchy which bureaucratization, led by professionalization, introduces into voluntary organizations.

Global Civil Society

Several of the issues identified at the local and national level also surface in the global perspective. Global civil society is a space where things happen. It is not an actor in itself. It is a place where social movement organizations, international research and advocacy networks, global policy bodies as well as a wide variety of non-governmental (NGO) and international non-governmental organizations (INGO) interact with states, United Nations and other intergovernmental bodies and the private sector itself. It is a political space which has grown in response to and in resistance to the globalizing forces of the day. It is of course the close conceptual cousin of "civil society", which has re-emerged over the past 25 years as a useful concept to describe the autonomous space for citizen action, organization and theorization.

It is argued that a set of global civil societies or a complex and elaborate global civil society is emerging and has gained visibility in the context of global economic consolidation. Global civil society refers to at least two related phenomena. The first phenomena can be understood as the sum-total of local, national, or regional civil society structures. Within this form of evolving global civil society practice, the tasks are the identification of local, national and regional forms of civil society and the creation of ways to strengthen communication, coordination, reflection, and capacities to act among discreet organizational forms which already exist.

A second form of global civil society formation is represented by the proliferation of specifically global forms of civil society. The Nestle Milk Boycott organizations, the various environmental organizations, women's organizations, peace groups and thousands of others have arisen within spaces of world citizen action. For these forms of global civil society, while composed of groups and individuals all located in particular localities, no national or local identity can be necessarily contributed to the whole. Leadership shifts according to functions, timing, locations of activities or cost effectiveness. Among the organizational form of these kinds of global civil society structures are the INGOs. In the field of adult education, the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE) is one such INGO. According to the Canadian International Development Agency, INGOs are global networks of individuals, non-governmental organizations or professional associations. They generally focus on one specific issue and they are driven by accepted universal values. INGOs frequently play an important policy and coordinating role at the international level.

Structurally, in contrast to the traditional bureaucratic and hierarchic model of organizations appropriate for a large number of people, "networks are emerging both among the global elite and the powerless everywhere." It is suggested that "networking" consists of at least the following types of activities: research on skills, needs, interests of network members; face-to-face meetings; national, regional, continental or international events; exchange of letters; telephone conversations; fax exchanges; newsletter or bulletin services; publications and exchange of materials; and electronic mail systems using computers.

Transformative adult education is about supporting shifts away from the global market vision of growth-oriented, market driven, and consumerist human societies towards life-affirming visions. Transformative practices contribute to the transformation of structures of power and domination be these discursive, electronic, mechanical, social, or physical. Adult education and intentional adult learning has an important role to play in the strengthening of global civil society.

Commitment to transformative learning demands considerable self-reflection. In the contest of shifting paradigms and divergent visions of community, men and women need to open themselves to new ways of understanding who and what we are. The dominant world has often privileged whiteness, malenesss, heterosexuality, able-bodiedness and the English language. The conversation between women and men, persons from rich and poor countries needs to be honest, vital and respectful.

Many of the information programmes of the various global NGOs or networks would be more effective if they were to be re-conceptualized as learning networks or adult education programmes because of the emphasis needed on interactive starting-where-one lives learning. Global learning strategies are an integral component of an evolving global civil society.

Civil society and global civil society contain vast and growing contradictions. In international development circles for example, NGOs are being transformed overnight by the opportunities to become subcontractors to the World Bank or other major national or international funding bodies. Whereas groups of protesting NGOs activities would at one time have been met with police or military force, they are increasingly met with contracts. It is not possible to make sweeping statements about all civil society organizations in contexts like these. We also know that not all global civil society organizations, international NGOs and global networks are democratic spaces.

Adult education, which refers to both institutional as well as social movement contexts and in both formal and informal settings, has an important role to play in the strengthening of the capacities of global civil society. For adult educators who are allied with social movements, community-based associations or nongovernmental organizations civil society contains the vision of a place where the raw savagery of global capitalism can be openly criticized and examined, and is a public sphere where transformative ideas can be nourished and developed. This releases energy in support of a global urgency for environmentally and socially relevant democracy.

Summary

There are several common themes running through the three perspectives of civil society offered in this paper. For example, all three perspectives included concern about the role of the market and its impact on civil society organizations and associations. Likewise, the organizational structure of civil society institutions were scrutinized in each scenario to determine their degree of uniqueness from the organizations of political and economic society. And finally, it was determined that adult education, informal, nonformal, and formal, especially transformative adult education, either played or has a significant role to play in the organizations, institutions, and associations of civil society.

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Adult Graduate Students' Perceptions of Gender & Race: Implications for Program Development in Rural Communities

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to assess the existing levels of awareness toward issues of race and gender in graduate students. Implications for curriculum planning are that faculty members should encourage sensitivity to diversity in all of their classes through small group discussions, case studies, presentations concerning racial and gender issues, and readings that encourage multiple views of issues.

Knowledge about individual awareness and sensitivity to issues of gender and race have been discussed as crucial to constructing effective counselor-based education (Pederson, 1988; Ponterotto & Pederson, 1993; Sue, 1978) and adult education programs (Cunningham, 1989; Hayes & Colin III, 1994; Tisdell, 1995). Adult educators, counselors, and school administrators increasingly find themselves working in situations that require them to engage effectively in cross-cultural exchanges between themselves and their students or clients. As professors who work within the fields of counselor education, adult education, higher education student services (a counseling related program) and educational administration, we are concerned with the level of sensitivity and awareness our graduate students have concerning race and gender issues. We are particularly aware of the challenges faced by our students in becoming sensitive to issues of race, class, and gender since most of them live and work in rural southern communities.

Graduate education courses should provide training for adult educators, counselors, student affairs professionals and school administrators who will in turn practice in settings where they interact with the larger diverse population of learners. Curriculum should incorporate readings, reflection and discussions concerning the important issues of race, class, gender, and sexual orientation (Cunningham, 1989; Bailey, Tisdell, & Cervero, 1994). However, to plan programs and classes that focus on these topics and stimulate discussion, active listening, and increased understanding among students, more information is needed concerning the current awareness and sensitivity of graduate students in these programs toward issues of race and gender. The problem this study addressed, then, was the lack of information concerning the level of awareness of racial and gender issues of typical graduate students in adult education, counselor education, higher education student services, and educational administration programs. The purpose of this study was to discover the existing levels of awareness toward issues of race and gender in order to plan programs that are more effective and classes for graduate students.

Method

Participants and the Graduate Programs. The university which was the site for this study is located in a rural coastal area of a southeastern state, and students within the graduate programs typically are from and return to practice in rural settings. The programs included in this study are located in the College of Education, whose graduate enrollment during Fall 1997, the period of this study, was 7.2% of the total university population of approximately 14,000 students. In any one quarter, 70-75% of the graduate students attend school part. Masters, educational specialists and doctoral degrees are all available in this college of education.

The majority of participants in this study were between the ages of 20- 40. Eighteen percent were adult education master degree students, 50% were in counselor education programs, 14% were higher education student services majors, and 18% were in educational administration or other graduate education degree programs. Twenty-four percent of the participants were African-Americans, 75% were European-Americans, and 1% were of other ethnic backgrounds. Of the total participants, 75% were female and 25% were male. Only 19% of those surveyed had taken a multicultural or cross-cultural counseling course; the rest reported never participating in either of these classes. The demographics reported are consistent with the enrollment patterns in the programs examined and reflect actual population of students.

Two graduate courses specifically designed to address issues of race, class, and gender are available in the College of Education in this university: Foundations *of Multicultural Education*, offered as a curriculum course, and *Cross-Cultural Counseling*, offered as a counselor education course. The Adult Education Master of Education Program requires the *Foundations of Multicultural Education* course. No other graduate program within this study required that students take courses that raise their awareness of issues of race, class, and gender. However, the College of Education conceptual framework at this university indicates that faculty members should acknowledge diversity in all of their undergraduate and graduate classes.

Instrument. In order to ascertain graduate students' awareness and sensitivity to gender and multicultural issues, the researchers chose to use the Quick Discrimination Index Social Attitude Survey (QDI), developed by Ponterotto et al. (1995). The QDI contains 25 Likert-type self-report items in an inventory that measures attitudes toward racial diversity, women's equality, and can examine both cognitive and affective components of prejudicial attitudes (Ponterotto & Pederson, 1993). It also allows researchers to look at both racial and gender issues together on one survey. The QDI asks participants to choose on a Likert scale how strongly they agree or disagree with statements such as "Generally speaking, men work harder than women" and "Overall, I think racial minorities in America complain too much about racial discrimination" (Ponterotto & Pederson, 1993, pg. 156-157). Considering the total scores, participants can fall into one of the following groups: (Ponterotto & Peterson, 1993, p. 158)

> *Score 25-50 indicates that the respondent is very insensitive to and unaware of minority and women's issues.*
> *Score of 51-75 indicates low sensitivity and little awareness of minority and women's issues.*
> *Score of 76-100 indicates moderate sensitivity to and knowledge of minority and women's issues.*
> *Score of 101-125 indicates high sensitivity to and knowledge of minority and women's issues.*

Procedure. The data were collected within the same month from graduate students enrolled in master of education degree programs in counselor education, adult education higher education student services (a counseling related program), and educational administration. During the academic term of data collection, all classes that were offered by a program area targeted above were surveyed. To avoid duplication and provide confidentiality of responses, the last six digits of the social security numbers were requested from participants. No other data that would identify students was requested. SPSS 6.1 computer program was used for data analysis that yielded mean and standard deviation comparisons. Except in one instance (courses), categories that had fewer than nine entries were excluded from data analysis.

Results

Means and standard deviations were calculated for the group as a whole as well as the sub-categories of Race, Age, Program Area, Gender, and Courses Taken. Within the range of 0-125, the mean scores for the entire population surveyed was 80.32 with a standard deviation of 11.98, indicating that although the group surveyed had a moderate sensitivity to and understanding of women's and minority issues, there was some variance within the group. When the scores of sub-categories were examined, differences in scores became apparent (Hansman, Jackson, Grant, & Spencer, in press). Chart 1 compares means and standard deviations for the different populations surveyed. The chart also provides the sensitivity classification from the QDI.

Chart 1

Population Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	QDI Classification
Entire Population	80.32	11.98	Moderate Sensitivity
African Americans	87.88	10.77	Moderate Sensitivity
European Americans	77.88	11.49	Low-Moderate Sensitivity
Females	82.89	10.67	Moderate Sensitivity
Males	72.55	12.66	Low sensitivity

Although barely above the low awareness cut-off score of 75, European American's mean score of 77.88 indicates a moderate awareness of these issues. African Americans' mean score reflects their moderate, but not high, sensitivity to minority and women's issues. Gender was also a sub-category that was used to examine scores. While the females' mean score indicates that they are moderately aware of gender and minority issues, the males' mean score indicates that they have a low awareness and sensitivity to these issues.

Age was also a variable used to sort mean scores. There were too few scores in the age group over 45 to report. These scores indicated that all age groups are within the moderate category. However, the age group 41-45 score of 76.91 is very close to the low sensitivity QDI rating (Hansman, Jackson, Grant, & Spencer, in press). Chart 2 compares means and standard deviations for the different age groups surveyed. The chart also provides the sensitivity classification from the QDI.

Chart 2

Age Group	Mean	Standard Deviation	QDI Classification
Ages 20-25	80.85	10.29	Moderate Sensitivity
Ages 26-30	77.79	12.34	Moderate Sensitivity
Ages 31-35	83.62	14.80	Moderate Sensitivity
Ages 36-40	82.45	11.84	Moderate Sensitivity
Ages 41-45	76.91	8.12	Low-Moderate Sensitivity

We also examined the data by program areas. There were too few cases in other program areas to report data. Except for students in Educational Administration, whose score placed them in the low awareness category, all other program areas' scores indicated that they had a moderate awareness of gender and race issues (Hansman, Jackson, Grant, & Spencer, in press). Chart 3 compares means and standard deviations for the different program areas surveyed. The chart also provides the sensitivity classification from the QDI.

Chart 3

Program Area	Mean Standard	Deviation	QDI Classification
Higher Ed Student Services	86.5	10.60	Moderate Sensitivity
School Counseling	81.75	12.66	Moderate Sensitivity
Community Counseling	80.77	8.9	Moderate Sensitivity
Adult Education	78.77	14.34	Moderate Sensitivity
Educational Administration	74.10	7.77	Low sensitivity

Students who had taken either *Foundations of Multicultural Education* or *Cross-Cultural Counseling* courses scored higher than those students who had taken neither of these courses. . Only one participant reported taking both courses; interestingly enough, her or his mean score was 105, indicating a very high awareness and sensitivity to racial and gender issues (Hansman, Jackson, Grant, & Spencer, in press). Chart 4 provides a comparison of means and standard deviations for students who took courses designed to raise their awareness concerning issues of race and gender and those who did not take any of these courses. The chart also provides the sensitivity classification from the QDI.

Chart 4

Courses Taken	Mean	Standard Deviation	QDI Classification	n
Cross-Cultural Counseling	87.5	2.12	Moderate Sensitivity	2
Foundations of Multiculturalism	85	11.41	Moderate Sensitivity	12
Did not take Awareness Courses	78.71	11.67	Moderate Sensitivity	58
Took both courses	105	N/A	High sensitivity	1

Discussion

Although the mean score for the entire population surveyed was 80.32, denoting that the group surveyed had a moderate sensitivity to and understanding of women's and minority issues, these scores indicate that although the students are moderately aware, they still lack basic understandings of issues concerning race and gender that are essential to them in their practices as adult educators, counselors, and school administrators. Examination of the scores by subgroups reveal the varying levels of awareness within the population surveyed. It is noteworthy that African Americans and women scored only in the moderate range and not the high-awareness range. Perhaps this is due to the historic and geographic context of rural southern culture. Ponterotto et al. (1995) and Ponterotto and Pederson (1993) theorize that people who live in urban settings are more accepting of racial diversity and women's issues because the diversity of their day-to-day contacts allows them to interact with a more diverse group of people. The low to moderate awareness scores of some groups in our study may be an example of this theory.

Among the most significant finding of this study, however, was that participants within the graduate programs of school administration had the lowest scores (M=74.10) within any of the groups surveyed, which placed them in the low awareness category. Since school administrators are essential to implementing programs within educational institutions, it points out how institutionalized customs and norms may perpetuate sexism and racism. If school administrators are unaware or unwilling to address racial or gender issues within their school setting, they are setting the tone for a non-responsive culture. Graduate curriculum for school administrators should include courses that heighten sensitivity to racial and gender issues.

The most promising finding, however, was the high scores of those students who had taken the *Foundations of Multicultural Education* and/or the *Cross-Cultural Counseling* courses. Although the number of students surveyed who met these requirements was very small in this study, their high scores on the QDI may indicate that courses that focus on issues of race, class, gender and sexual orientation issues may indeed foster sensitivity towards these issues by students in the courses. Further research is needed and should focus on discovering if sensitivity is consistently raised following these courses.

Conclusion

Our concern about preparing our students to effectively deal with race and gender led us to examine our own graduate curricula at our university and the beliefs of students within our graduate programs concerning race and gender. While faculty members may want to be inclusive of racial and gender issues, frequently the politics of knowledge production and dissemination at local levels may get in the way for planning inclusive curricula. "What counts as knowledge in a particular learning context -- and decisions about what gets included in the curriculum for a given learning activity -- are decisions made with attention to the politics of ....educational context and to what is seen as 'real' knowledge relevant to this educational context" (Tisdell, 1995, p. 11). The "real knowledge" Tisdell mentions reflects the power and politics of knowledge production and dissemination, both inside the educational institution and in the outlying communities from which graduate students come and subsequently return. This real knowledge, many times seeped in historic and institutionalized oppression, provides the background for students' beliefs and actions concerning gender and racial issues. As teachers and researchers, we believe that we should endeavor to plan classes and curricula and "become instruments though which our students begin to reflect on the multiple and varied realities that they, like we bring to the classroom" (Sheared, 1994, p. 27).

This survey reflects in general a low to moderate awareness of issues of race and gender in a rural southeastern regional university. This could in part be due to the rural setting within which the study took place and the historic oppression of the southern culture in the United States. Since students who participated in this study come from and return to rural settings, their beliefs are probably indicative of the larger societal view in the rural settings in which they live and practice. The question becomes, then, how do we, as educators, become, as Sheared (1994) says, "instruments though which our students begin to reflect on the multiple and varied realities that they, like we, bring to the classroom "(p. 27)?

Who has the power to determine what counts as knowledge is extremely important to understanding how issues of race and gender can be emphasized in graduate level courses. College and University faculty members frequently serve as both teachers and researchers and have the power to "produce knowledge in their research pursuits; they also determine what research is 'good,' what research is to be published and disseminated, and what of the resulting literature is to be included in the curriculum" (Johnson-Bailey, Tisdell, and Cervero, 1994, p. 65). As the College of Education Framework at our institution states, faculty members should acknowledge diversity in all of their classes. This acknowledgment can take many forms: small group discussions, case studies, presentations concerning racial and gender issues, and readings that encourage multiple views of issues. Through these activities, students may begin to become more sensitive to and aware of issues of race and gender that they face in their practices as adult educators, counselors, higher education student services administrators, and school administrators. Sensitivity and awareness are the first steps toward change.

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The Blues and the Scientific Method: Codified Cultural Schemas and Understanding Adult Cognition from a Multicultural Perspective

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Abstract: Codified cultural schemas are presented as mental structures reflective of a particular culture or language that have been made public, recorded, and disseminated. The Western scientific method and the Blues are contrasted as two examples of codified cultural schemas. Analysis of such schemas that goes beyond Eurocentric structures--and beyond the modalities of language and mathematics--to include the arts and other forms of human intelligence can help us better understand adult cognition across cultures, as well as aid us in the work of adult education in multicultural societies.

Attempts to understand adult cognition and learning must move away from universalistic approaches in order to become more inclusive of multicultural perspectives. We must continuously challenge dominant constructions that claim to represent "how (all) adults learn" or "how (all) adults think." One way to move beyond these universalistic approaches is through deconstructing Eurocentric ideas about adult cognition and posing multicultural alternatives. Improved understandings of these issues will enable us as adult educators to better conceptualize adult learning and education processes in multicultural societies.

Codified Cultural Schemas

A useful tool for conceptualizing and deconstructing cognition and its cultural influences is the idea of the cognitive "schema." Schema theories have been influential in cognitive science, cognitive psychology, learning theory, and reading theory for well over two decades. Schemas are vehicles for comprehension, storage, and recall of information. They are associative structures in declarative memory; network structures that store general knowledge about objects, events, and structures. A schema can be thought of as an abstracted pattern onto which information can be organized; as a set of rules or strategies for imposing order on experience. A schema is best seen as being at the same time both structure and process--a set of rules. In perception, schemas have an assimilation function: they work to recognize and process input. In memory, they provide organization for the storage of memories, and they may reorganize these memories in the face of new information or changing goals. In recall, schemas provide the rules of arranging memories, and for determining the "what must have been" for any gaps they detect. When we learn something new that we interpret as related to pre-existing schemas, we integrate the new knowledge into those pre-existing schemas. Schemas are thought to be primarily unconscious, but in some cases they may be evident to the conscious mind (Bruer, 1994; Minsky, 1975; Rice, 1980; Rumelhart, Hinton, & Williams, 1976).

The idea of the schema is supported by inferential evidence; physical evidence would be difficult to provide. The general nature of the arguments for the existence of cognitive schemas is: "Schemas or something like them must be there; how else could we explain how minds operate?" This is quite similar to--and no less influential than--Chomsky's (1975) argument for the existence of the "language acquisition device" in understanding the young child's rapid development of linguistic competence. Schemas are thus widely accepted as inordinately useful tools for conceptualizing human cognition and learning.

Different schemas encompass various scopes and are applied at various levels of abstraction. They are also likely to have different distributions throughout various populations. Researchers like Piaget (1952) have supposed that certain schemas are universal in the cognitive development of young children. At the other end of the spectrum are idiosyncratic schemas, developed through the unique elements of an individual's experience. On the continuum between "universal" and "idiosyncratic" lie numerous culturally-derived schemas. They are experientially-developed, but they are widely distributed among the members of a cultural group. It is these cultural schemas, these socially-given perceptual modes, which operate to produce a recognizable world view (Rice, 1980; Lakoff, 1987). It is the notion of the cultural schema which is of most interest to us in understanding cultural influences on cognition in the current study. **Figure 1** summarizes a possible continuum from "universal" through "cultural" to "idiosyncratic," with several examples.

Figure 1: A Possible Continuum of Schemas

UNIVERSAL SCHEMAS	CULTURAL SCHEMAS	IDIOSYNCRATIC SCHEMAS
◄	─	►
Constructs likely to be found in all humans.	Constructs characteristic of a particular culture or language.	Constructs characteristic of an individual.
For example . . .		
DOG: a small furry mammal that wags it tail & barks.	DOG: a pet, a work animal, a scavenger, or dinner.	DOG: "my little Muffy" or dogs like her.
SELF: perceptual recognition of one body as discrete from another.	SELF: differing cultural constructions of the self—as an entity to be "actualized" or an "illusion".	SELF: individual conceptions of the nature of "oneself".

This paper expands upon the concept of the cultural schema to argue that within many cultures and language systems there may also be particular cultural schemas that are publicly "codified." That is to say, as **Figure 2** suggests, they are publicly named, they are promoted for their symbolic power, rules have been developed for them, they are recorded and disseminated, they are often reified, and they are often viewed ahistorically.

Figure 2: "Codified" Cultural Schemas

Codified Cultural Schemas are cognitive structures and processes characteristic of a particular culture or language:

- that have been PUBLICLY NAMED
- that are PROMOTED for their SYMBOLIC POWER
- for which RULES are developed
- that are RECORDED and DISSEMINATED
- that are often REIFIED
- that are often viewed AHISTORICALLY

Codified cultural schemas are important to attend to, then, because they provide us with "public handles" on cultures that we may grasp for analytical purposes--whether or not we are members of those cultures. Examples of codified cognitive forms might include: the Western scientific method (the focus of this paper), Western logic and rationality; particular religions; the Confucian system of social mutuality of obligation and respect; and the Blues (also the focus of this paper).

The Scientific Method as a Codified Cultural Schema

We will briefly deconstruct the Western scientific method as a codified cultural schema prior to moving to a discussion of the Blues. Elsewhere (Hemphill, 1994) I have presented a similar deconstruction of Western critical rationality as a codified cultural schema.

The historical context of development of the scientific method is 15th and 16th century Europe. The ingredients of the schema include: (1) deductive reasoning; (2) inductive reason and experimentation; and (3) mathematics.

Deductive reasoning originated in the syllogisms of Aristotle (if A=B, and B=C, then A=C). It assumed that through a sequence of formal steps of logic, from the general to the particular, a valid conclusion could inevitably be deduced from a valid premise. The deductive schema allowed a powerful chain of ideas to be linked together. Deductive reason was a dominant European thought form from Ancient Greece through the Renaissance which had gradually became sterile without an experimental base.

Inductive reasoning as a cognitive schema argued for the study of a number of individual cases that would lead to an educated guess (a hypothesis), and eventually to a generalization. Induction presumed that if one collected enough data without any preconceived notion about their significance, inherent, generalizable relationships would emerge. The use of induction could be seen in the work of Renaissance artist-engineers such as Da Vinci, who experimented constantly and codified their findings from experience.

Mathematics during the Renaissance and later in the Enlightenment began to be seen as a way of understanding underlying "laws" of nature. Everyday experience was seen as deceptive, and mathematical abstractions were thought to be able to clear away confusion. The use of mathematics in such a pervasive way required a radical form of abstraction to imagine invisible worlds and forces, as well as a ruthless simplification and concentration on formulating hypothetical abstractions that could be tested abstractly.

As **Figure 3** suggests, ultimately, the Western scientific method emerged as a complex and innovative blend of deduction, induction, and mathematics.

Figure 3: The Western Scientific Method as a Codified Cultural Schema

The Scientific Method emerged as a back-and-forth movement in which the investigator:

(1) First operates inductively from observations to hypotheses.

(2) Then operates deductively from these hypotheses to their implications, in order to check their validity from the standpoint of compatibility with accepted knowledge.

(3) After revision as needed, submits hypotheses to further test and inductive analysis through the collection of data specifically designed to test their validity at the empirical level.

(4) Then often links together the new findings with other findings or knowledge, again employing deductive reason.

Why deconstruct the Western scientific method as a codified cultural schema in this way? In truth, its phenomenal success created problems along with tremendous technological advancement. For one, it has become rather too easy to accept the scientific method uncritically as a given cognitive universal, naturally occurring in the brain, in all cultures. We have also been encouraged to see it ahistorically, and as a privileged form of knowledge, with more validity or legitimacy than other knowledge. Furthermore, the scientific method schema accepts only certain kinds of phenomena as evidence: observable, measurable, countable phenomena, thus conceiving of knowledge in only one, rather narrowly-focused kind of way. If we limit ourselves to this way of thinking we limit our own cognitive potential.

Finally, we must also engage in this sort of deconstruction because the scientific method is at the heart of the dominant, Eurocentric paradigm of North American culture. The processes of deconstructing dominant Western codified schemas like the scientific method and Western rationality are well under way in many fields, and may be seen in the work of postmodernists (Foucault, 1972; Lyotard, 1989; Hemphill, forthcoming), postfeminists (Haraway, 1997) and postcolonialists (Said, 1979). However, in addition to deconstructing dominant cultural schemata such as the scientific method, it is also fair to ask: What alternative cultural schemas that emerge from non-Eurocentric perspectives can we identify to help us investigate and better understand adult cognition from a multicultural perspective? For us to develop multicultural societies and inclusive schooling, we must recognize the legitimacy and equal weight of cultural schemas that emerge from more diverse cultural sources.

The Arts as a Source of Alternative Codified Cultural Schemas

Gardner's (1983) theory of "multiple intelligences" provides a heuristic first step for the effort to broaden our conceptions of cognition across cultures. Gardner identifies at least seven areas of human intellectual performance: linguistic intelligence, musical intelligence, logical-mathematical intelligence, spatial intelligence, bodily-kinesthetic intelligence, interpersonal intelligence, and intrapersonal intelligence. It is all too clear that the predominant focus of Western considerations of cognition in research and schooling have focused on what Gardner would call "linguistic" and "logical-mathematical" intelligence. Indeed, these are the areas of cognitive performance most often assessed in schooling and research studies on human cognition.

The area of musical intelligence in particular offers one promising possibility. To lay a base for investigating musical intelligence, we can cite Gardner (1983) and Dowling & Harwood (1986) on music and human intellectual performance: certain parts of the brain may be identified as key to production and perception of music; music is a universal faculty appearing in all cultures and historical periods; there is an identifiable core set of cognitive operations (including pitch, rhythm, and melody) in music; musical notation provides an accessible and lucid symbol system; and musical intelligence yields significant cultural products. It is clear that accurate interpretation of music, as of language, requires appropriate mental structures. High-level mental structures are prerequisite to music cognition.

The Blues as an Important Codified Cultural Schema

Once we move down the path of music cognition, the work of Murray (1996), Davis (1998), Floyd (1996), and Jones (1963) lead us in the direction of the Blues. Murray (1996) makes particularly compelling arguments that portray the Blues as a powerful codified cultural schema. It is much more than a 12-bar or 16-bar musical form. He describes the Blues as an African American cultural schema that conveys not simply musical messages, but also complex aesthetic, cultural, and political messages. He further suggests that the Blues reflects a value system that includes: affirmation in the face of adversity; improvisation, creativity, innovation, adaptability, and continuity in situations of disruption and discontinuity; grace under pressure; and an unsentimental but heroic and romantic struggle in the face of bad odds. In addition, he argues that a blues statement employs its own language and syntax, including such language forms as: vamps, riffs, breaks, fills, call and response, chase, bar trading, and polyrhythms. Thus, the Blues conveys messages not just through its lyrical content, but through its form and practice. Davis (1998) argues equally powerfully for the Blues as a codified cultural schema that displays the power to convey complex meanings and counternarratives on sexual politics, ideology, resistance, emotion and other psychosocial realities. Floyd (1995) and Jones (1963) argue persuasively for the African origins, as well as the enduring African features of the schema of the Blues. **Figure 4** summarizes a view of the Blues as a codified cognitive schema.

Figure 4: The Blues as a Codified Cultural Schema

The Blues is a codified cultural schema of African American origin with cultural/aesthetic, sociopolitical, and cognitive structural elements:

CULTURAL/AESTHETIC
- **Affirmation in face of adversity**
- **Improvisation, creativity, adaptability, and continuity in situations of discontinuity**
- **Grace under pressure**
- **Unsentimental but heroic struggle in the face of bad odds**

SOCIOPOLITICAL

Lyrical content expressing critiques and counternarratives of:
- racism
- sexual politics
- ideology
- resistance
- economics

COGNITIVE/STRUCTURAL

A 12- or 16-bar musical form with its own language & syntax:
- **riff**
- **vamp**
- **call & response**
- **break**
- **polyrhythms**
- **chorus**
- **syncopation**
- **tag**
- **idiomatic timbre**

The influence of the Blues is by no means limited to African American culture. Indeed, even the most cursory analysis of the history of jazz, rhythm and blues, rock and roll, country, and the American popular song leads rapidly to the conclusion that the Blues is the dominant subtext and underlying form of American popular music. It has long been accepted among popular musicians and critics alike that the pervasive influence of the Blues is readily evident in the vast majority of twentieth century American popular musical expression. Beyond this, due to global markets, the world's popular music has become increasingly dominated by American music. This suggests the global pervasiveness of the schema of the Blues.

Despite these arguments, it is still no mean feat to bring the discourse of the Blues into an academic discussion of cognition. The difficulty researchers may have in accepting the Blues as a schema on a par with the Scientific Method is surely related to the effects of Eurocentrism and marginalization on non-dominant cultural schemas. It is no accident that a cultural schema such as the Blues, as a musical form generated from African American culture and primarily found in expressions of popular culture, will not generally be found in academic discussions of cognition.

Identifying a potent schema like the Blues as a counternarrative to such dominant schemas as the Western scientific method, then, is not a trivial act. Doing so can aid us in broadening our conceptions of adult cognition, learning, and education beyond received Eurocentric categories. Neither the arts, nor music, nor the Blues are trivial areas--they are simply marginalized from a Eurocentric perspective, and have to date been ignored as cognitive processes in the ways that science and rationality have been. This marginalization is a function of power, and not the result of any universal or abstract measure of cognitive value.

Implications and Directions for Further Research

The issues raised here can contribute in several ways to adult education theory and practice. First, the notion of the "codified cultural schema" can be used as a tool in identifying mental structures for purposes of deconstruction as well as education. Second, the specific case of the Blues and its contrast with the scientific method can aid us and our students in conceiving of the ranges of form, content, and influence of mental structures across cultures. Finally, this foray into the arts can serve to remind us that adults as learners have many forms and reasons for self-expression. We would do well to use this example to broaden our conceptions of adults as learners, their purposes, and their processes for learning.

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Metaphors in Practice: Theories-in-Use Among Diverse Community Development Practitioners

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Abstract: Findings from this grounded theory research indicate that community development practitioners in both North America and Australia create similar working theories based on their experience in communities.

This research expands our previous work (Moore & Hill, 1998) regarding theories-in-use among community development practitioners. Our initial findings were based on a group of adult education and community development practitioners in a single geographic area, most of whom were employed by the same southeastern university. The current research increases the number and location of research participants. We continue our interest in the implicit theories that guide practice, diversifying the research pool introduces both culture and context to the research.

Purpose Statement

Our initial research began as we reflected and discussed our reactions to an observation by an Australian colleague that community development practitioners in North America are not as prone to developing formal models and theories about their work as others in the international community of scholars. Instead of confirming this comment, our 1998 research indicated that "rather than failing to have a theoretical basis for their work, the people we interviewed utilized a sophisticated blend of theory, integrating literature from many disciplines with extensive experience working with communities" (Moore & Hill, 1998, p. 231).

Our current research seeks to ascertain if there are unifying concepts that hold true across different cultures and contexts. Using a grounded theory methodology, we will analyze our larger pool of interviews with the following purposes:

1. To better understand what informs the actions of practitioners--not only what they do, but why
2. To understand how culture and context affect theories-in-use and practice.

Whereas previously we relied heavily on the literature of reflective practice (Argyris and Schön, 1974; Bright; 1996; Schön, 1983, 1991), our current emphasis on culture and context require an expanded theoretical base. Hinds, Chaves, & Cypess (1992) indicate that all human action is context dependent and that a knowledge of context is required to adequately perceive meaning. Chaiklin (1993) observes that "scientific understanding of individuals engaged in a practice must include some analysis of the sociohistorical context in which the practice developed and proceeds" (p. 378). Part of the social context may be what is referred to in the literature as communities of practice (Brown, Collins & Duguid, 1988; Wenger, 1998). Appropriate use of concepts is a "function of culture and the activities in which the concept has been developed and used" (p. 7). Practitioners are connected by socially constructed webs of belief, in essence functioning as a culture. This professional culture affects the way practitioners perceive and interact with the world. Learning professional practice is thus a process of enculturation.

The actions of community developers are designed to assist adults to reflect, analyze, make decisions, and eventually implement action plans and strategies to solve problems existing in their communities (Vella, 1994). These can range anywhere from solving local economic problems and inviting environmentally appropriate industries to their region. In many cases, practitioners appear to be operating from implicit theories. Bartunek and Louis (1996) indicate that practitioners are guided by their own theories that address the interactions among small groups of people and the consequences of actions. Their "implicit or local theories are sets of heuristically developed rules of practice people use to make sense of the situations they commonly encounter, to weigh action alternatives, and to account for environmental exigencies they observe and experience" (p. 5). Bartunek and Louis point out that academics' theories about practice tend to differ from those of practitioners, and further that academic theories tend to have little impact on practice. This study will help community development practitioners to articulate their theories in actions and serve to document and disseminate these theories thus contributing to both the practice and literature of adult learning and community development.

Research Design

This research includes interviews with community developers from three locations. Interviews were conducted with ten individuals primarily employed by a southeastern university in the United States during the fall and winter of 1997. In addition to the initial pool of research participants, we have conducted additional interviews with practitioners from other North American locations as well as Australia. Moore was invited to be a keynote speaker at an international community development conference held in Tasmania, Australia in June of 1998. While there, he was able to interview six community developers in Tasmania and one in Melbourne. Interviews were also conducted or scheduled at the July,1998 Community Development Society Conference. Three face-to-face interviews were conducted with community development practitioners from the midwest United States. Three additional interviews were scheduled and conducted using electronic mail with people from some western states and Canada. The e-mail interviews were completed at the end of August, 1998. The basic research question for all of the interviews continued to be "what guides your practice?" " What are the ideas, philosophy, orientations, or models that guide what you do when you are working in communities?" Data were collected via face-to-face interviews, visits to communities, and photographs taken of communities where participants worked or had conducted workshops and training programs for residents.

This expanded group of research participants was composed of 23 people, 16 from North America and 7 from Australia. Nine males and fourteen females were included. The age range extended from the early thirties to late sixties. All research participants had experience working in the field of community development and adult education, working in both urban and rural communities. Eight had international experience. Ten had completed doctorate degrees, and two expect to complete their doctoral degrees in environmental protection in 1999. One has been awarded an honorary doctorate. Other people had completed bachelor or master's degrees and two are employed in community development while completing their undergraduate degrees in adult education.

Findings

Several themes emerged from our analysis of these data. Practitioners were able to be reflective about what guides their practice. Valuing local knowledge and leveraging resources were important for practitioners as they went about their community work. Providing space for people to be involved and heard were basic issues in this theme. Using stories and visions about the community was a technique for assisting community members to articulate their knowledge of the community and their visions for the future. Mental images or metaphors were used by community development practitioners as a quick way of communicating with peers and community members.

Reflecting About Practice. Community developers talked about assisting groups to see the big picture and how their issues fit into a larger system. Sometimes groups need assistance in analyzing their situation and reframing the situation with new information. The Principles of Good Practice, developed and published by the Community Development Society, was cited by one of the research participants as his guide for practice. One practitioner indicated that an ethic of professional integrity guides her practice. Being careful not to use inappropriate theories or models is what guides other community developers.

> *There is no single theory that can explain communities because there are too many different groups and goals and conflicts.*
>
> *Practice is guided by fragments of several theories or models; there may be unifying themes but there is not yet a single theory that explains environmental protection.*

The research literature in adult education and community development speaks about reflective practice (Argyris & Schön 1974), describing how professionals are critically aware of practicing their craft or speciality. Community developers in both North America and Australia pointed out their involvement in critical thinking, reframing situations, discussing their views and opinions with other practitioners, and examining the link between theory and practice. One person expressed the need for taking time to listen, learn, question, share, discuss and be immersed in the community. This same person pointed out the need to stop and think about what works and tried to explain why some methods or strategies were used in communities. Another participant pointed out that she was getting better at her practice as she became more mature and had more experience. In the same vein she noted that she was more thoughtful and more reflective about her practice. Additional comments related to thinking about ideas and actions that could be used in community work.

> *So you start to think!*
>
> *But I'm not happy to feel good about what I'm doing, I want to actually see the results in what I'm doing.*
>
> *Everything is not grounded in theory; we do a lot of things based upon experience. Experience is a guide. Too much theory is not good just the same as too much experience; we need a blend of theory and experience.*

Local Knowledge, Creating Voice and Fostering Access to Resources. Ideas expressed by community developers could be grouped in the following categories 1) participation in community activities, 2) role of women in communities, 3) local control over issues and problems, 4) power relationships within the community, and 5) the value of local knowledge. Practitioners in Australia emphasized listening to and learning from community members. Similarly in North America, research participants recognized the importance of local knowledge for problem-solving. Additionally, all research participants suggested that people can be community resources, that experts coming into the community can also be important resources and that there are many ways people, experts, and community developers work with each other on issues, problems, and concerns. Community developers talked about participation in communities needing to be inclusive and involving diverse groups of people in decision making.

> *The whole community, no matter what camp they are in, still manage to come together . . . they just have a passion about this place. There was such a diverse community; there was everything from what we call "ferrels" who are the really alternative or bush people to people who lived in the town . . . from the pioneer families and newly established businesses who were quite well to do, and everything in between.*

Participants recognized that local people can be helped to voice their knowledge and when this information is shared it informs and empowers the group to work on community projects. Individuals working in teams gained confidence in their shared understanding and knowledge of the local situation. People appreciate that they are learning from each other, learning about local situations, learning about local culture, and they begin to value the knowledge that comes from themselves and the community. One participant talked about a group of women who had produced photo novels to express their concern about pesticides, noise, and respiratory problems in their farming community.

> *It was not only the knowledge, I think it was a lot of the self esteem that they got from participating and creating something very creative, untapped resources out there and unfortunately many people think that information must come from top down and I totally disagree with that.*

However, it was also noted by some community developers that they had an obligation to inform, educate, and make locals aware of situations in the community.

> *We need to educate our clients; we have an obligation to inform the client of options and problems, if any, as they work on project/program activities.*

Shared knowledge of locals is a community resource. People can act as resources and have skills that can benefit the community if this information is acknowledged, shared, and used for decision making. Resources also can include access to opportunities and unrealized potentials for the community.

> *You're entitled to service, let's actually give you the resources . . . so you can access the resources that the rest of the community operates on . . . so you don't feel stigmatized . . .*

Community networks and structures for sharing local knowledge and expertise are what connects different individuals, groups, organizations, and neighborhoods to a common theme or goal.

> *Good community development stuff would be to get people first up to experience something, get them to reflect on it, get them to use it again somewhere, get them to show somebody else about it, and then it would become meaningful.*

Social networks provide ways for locals to become informed about community needs, share information about their interests and expectations, seek knowledge and expertise locally and from experts outside the community, and they might even create an organization or structure to help them manage this activity.

Community developers reported that their work was about identifying, organizing, creating, and promoting voices from diverse locations in the community. Making sure that many voices were heard in the community was one way of cutting across cultural and socioeconomic lines and promoting communications. They were also engaged in helping people to understand that locals have a collective voice that is powerful and can be used to get things done in the community.

Stories and Vision for the Community. Community developers talked about using stories, the telling and the listening, as a tool to elicit the sharing of ideas and learning from others. Although the mediums used to stimulate story telling such as writing, drawing, plays, photos, and discussion may differ, there seemed to be a lot of similarities in the way story telling was described in the North American and Australian interviews. Telling and listening to stories about the community focused on the past, present, and future. Needs were identified in the past and present stories and change or impact seemed to be illustrated in the stories about the future. Energy and passion about community activities was evident in the local people's expressions of their hopes and fears for community change.

Locals have stories about their community that illustrates their values and visions for the future. Community plays, photo novels, articles, journals, art, and culture are creative ways used to share ideas about their town, village, or neighborhood. Other creative activities with stories included drawing mental models and doing mind mapping to get people involved in using visuals and then talking about these illustrations to generate ideas about community development potentials.

> *What we do with story telling is to get people to write down ideas and to capture their thoughts on paper and with visuals and to get them talking about what happened.*

When people talk about their lives, their stories, and their communities, the research participants also become energized. They had energy and passion about what they saw being described by locals. Some of this energy and passion is about creating change in the community or neighborhood.

> *Communities change by people understanding what their image is now and how it can be changed in the future.*

Energy and passion provide the drive or motivation and also suggest the potential for something to change. Community developers talked about using a variety of approaches, strategies, and techniques to get people involved. They asked people to tell stories while others listened and discussed what they heard. Local knowledge and creativity can be focused on community issues with positive results.

Mental Images. Because we noted the pervasive use of metaphors in our first paper (Moore and Hill, 1998), we were attentive to the use of metaphors in other locations and cultures in subsequent data collection. When we began this analysis, metaphors were not so easily identified, perhaps because of our inability to recognize them outside of our own cultural background. Yet metaphors were used by some of the community developers in all three locations to quickly describe activities and processes.

In North America, communities are sometimes described as having *ugly babies* meaning that everyone might see that the baby is ugly but no one would tell the parents and this is what some communities experience. For example, residents might pass by the exposed sewer but no one does anything to correct the problem. Another expression used refers to a *dog sled team* meaning that if you are not the lead dog in a dog-sled team the view is always the same. Communities need leaders to emerge that have different views and visions and have the skill to point these possibilities out to others. *Art of the long view* is a metaphor based on a book title (Schwartz, 1991) that means examining the situation over a period of time, differentiating it from the limited perspective of a short-term approach. *At the end of the day* was used by some of the practitioners in Australia. It is a results-oriented phrase intended to mean that when the project is done practitioners examine what has been accomplished or changed. *Pick the eyes out of what you see* around you may mean taking the time to critically reflect on what you observe. All of these metaphors stimulate mental images for people. These are short hand ways of communicating that are very effective in a single group or culture. There is the potential, however, for confusion or inappropriate mental images to emerge if individuals are not from the same culture or sub-culture. Practitioners seem to be aware of the potential for confusion when using metaphors with community groups and colleagues. In our analysis, we realized that metaphors can cause confusion both intra-culturally and cross-culturally.

Implications for Community Development Practice

Our findings support the idea that community development practitioners create theories based on their experience in practice. These theories and practices are based on understanding who the locals are, recognizing that they have knowledge about the situation, and that this knowledge can be evoked by providing opportunities for story telling and discussion. People together can determine if their shared knowledge is adequate to solve problems in their community or if they need to involve outside expertise and resources. Plans of actions and sometimes organizing structures can be created for addressing local needs and combating persistent issues in the community. This approach reinforces the idea of local control where local knowledge is central. This is not a linear approach and in fact, seems to parallel double-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1974).

We could not disentangle culture from context from the interviews we conducted. We analyzed each group in our study separately in order to identify cultural differences that could affect community development practice. What made it difficult to accomplish this was the fact that people we interviewed were working with different sub-cultures within their own nation. From our analysis, it appeared that the issue of cultural differences seemed less significant than the needs identified in the local context.

We also speculate that community development practitioners participate in a shared community of practice within their profession. One of the ways this might function is through professional organizations such as the Community Development Society, which facilitates sharing and dialogue among members that crosses national boundaries. In fact, our results parallel an international listserv discussion of community values in practice sponsored by this organization. In this forum, Cornelia Flora (personal communication, November 19, 1998) describes the results of her research exploring what communities value as outcomes. Her findings include 1) increased use of the knowledge, skills, and abilities of local people, 2) strengthened relationships and communication, and 3) improved community initiatives including shared vision.

What we did learn from our study was that a similar process of working with communities is utilized by the practitioners we interviewed in Australia and North America, and the importance of context was made more visible. The solutions created by the process described above seem to be tailored to a specific situation or context (Bartunek & Louis, 1996). There did not appear to be differences in the processes used by community development practitioners, but solutions created by them in concert with community members were highly specific to the needs and realities of a local community.

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Irreconcilable Differences: Critical Feminism, Learning at Work, and HRD

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Abstract: This study explored the contradictions among critical feminist theory, Human Resource Development, and the reality of women's experiences. Missing from the HRD literature, with its managerial focus, is the centrality of workers', particularly women's experiences of HRD and the gendered nature of work itself.

Theoretical Framework

Our inquiry is grounded in critical feminist theory. Feminist theory is interested in inquiry focused on agency, power relations, shifting positionalities, voice, individual experience, and socially constructed knowledge (Acker, Barry, & Esseveld, 1996; Tisdell, 1995). Although feminist theory is often oriented around the dynamics of gender, it is inclusive of the interests of others who have been marginalized by race, class, sexual orientation, language, and the practices and politics of educational systems (Lather, 1991). Despite the agenda of inclusiveness, feminist theory has been described as lacking wholeness, due in part to the dominance of relatively privileged white women scholars (hooks, 1989; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1996). Critical educators, however, define their field as epitomizing the democratic ideal and accept responsibility to work toward social justice and democracy (Cunningham, 1992; Kincheloe, 1999). Feminist and critical theory come together to disrupt the status quo in a myriad of learning environments by examining individual experiences as phenomena. Therefore, a critical feminist perspective considers issues of power as well as bringing out elements of affect, social justice, marginalization, and contextual links among both students' and instructors' social, political, historical, and cultural locations (Collins, 1990; Lather, 1991).

Research Design

Reflecting on our own experiences as workers and educators, we have found that the literature on work and learning, especially critical scholarly work, has helped us understand how the various dimensions of power operate in our own particular places of work (e.g., Butler, 1997; Graham, 1995; Hart, 1992, 1996; Stalker, 1996; Townley, 1994). This critical reflection has also forced us to ask hard questions about the role education plays in the workplace. For example, who controls the goals, objectives, and definitions of learning and work, and for what purposes? Why does the assumption that workers personal objectives, visions, and points of view can and should be in alignment with management continue to go unquestioned? Is it ethical to impose HRD on workers for the purposes of organizational efficiency, productivity, and maximization of profit? Can the instrumental goals of training, the ongoing hierarchies of work, and the sustained balance of power relations in the workplace really be aligned with a feminist perspective?

Following the work of Bartunek and Louis (1996), we designed this study as an insider/outsider team research project. Epistemologically grounded in the assumption that knowledge is a human construct and thus located in an interpretive paradigm, the basis of "insider inquiry" is that researchers are participants in the situation being studied and that how insiders and outsiders work together is of major importance. In particular, our research team is composed of people who differ in their physical and psychological connectedness to the research setting and focal questions being examined. The team assumes both responsibility and shared authority for the study, meeting weekly to discuss issues and analyze the data.

Our study was conducted at two sites. We followed the process for selecting key informants suggested by Patton (1990). At the first location, a manufacturing firm in northeastern United States, informants consisted of eight female hourly workers and the female training manager. The hourly workers' perspectives were those of women engaged in the production process. At the second site, also in the Northeast, two work units were examined by the study – one provided student services and the other instructional design services. This organization provided educational services including focuses on higher, continuing, informal, and professional education. One of the researchers worked at this site as a team leader and another as an instructional designer. Worker-informants included female clerical staff and professional staff. The two sites provided an excellent opportunity for an in-depth examination of key workplace learning issues across a broad spectrum of types of work and workers.

Our ongoing study began with a research team of three female adult education doctoral students and a male adult education faculty member. All four of us had interests in, and experience with, workplace learning issues. At least one "insider" was employed in each of the two work sites where we conducted our research. For this specific study, the team consisted of three members all of whom work inside one of the two research sites. Having spent four years working together within a more or less traditional insider/outsider paradigm, we were comfortable with the processes and procedures we had worked out among the four-member team and, subsequently, a three-member team. However, as we considered what critical feminist perspectives on the workplace consisted of, the underlying structure and implications of the gendered nature of organizing our insider/outsider processes came to the surface. The two female members of the research team were "insiders" and the male participant was not, highlighting the complex issues of gender, voice, and power we were struggling to understand. Within our insider/outsider group of three, we now found ourselves confronting and opening for exploration the multi-layered aspects of the gendered nature of work at this micro-level as well as through the context of this study.

At the manufacturing facility, we began with observing activities on the shop floor and then conducting semi-structured interviews with hourly workers. We observed and talked to workers about their jobs, their educational background, and the ramifications of workplace training initiatives. In addition to interviews with white, middle-aged, female workers averaging seventeen years on the job, we had complete access to workers on the shop floor, observing the manufacturing process and conducting informal interviews. Interviews were also conducted with the plant training manager, the site's "insider," who was keeping a reflective journal.

This six-month critical ethnographic study was based upon reflective journals of the researchers, participant observation, and semi-structured interviews. We collaboratively designed the study including input from some of the participants, collected data, and interpreted results. Within a critical ethnographic paradigm, journal entries were examined, evaluated, and critiqued. Participation in formal HRD classes as well as informal and incidental learning activities were observed, field notes kept, and interviews recorded. Providing a rich database, journal entries became a means of writing as a way of knowing and a way of viewing HRD practice through interaction among researchers, written narrative, and the workplace as text (Fulwiler, 1987). Through participant observation and interviews, researchers had available on a daily basis, and in a social context, some of the reality-constituting interpretive practices through which women made meaning at work.

HRD Practice and Feminist Perspectives

The study identified numerous areas of contradiction between a critical feminist perspective on work and learning and the practices of HRD. Because we cannot do justice to all the issues that emerged, we would like to discuss some of them and raise others, hoping to bring these unexamined perspectives forward for future discussion and research by workplace educators.

At both sites we observed, as is the case in many workplaces, a flattening out of organizational hierarchies and intensification of work. In training terms, flattening out was described by educators at both research sites in positive terms as a way to bring decision-making opportunities to those who actually do the work thus giving them ownership in the processes of work. One way this was done was to have the women themselves do the training of new hires and fit that responsibility into their already full schedules. However, the women workers were much less positive about this development. The women pointed out that in practice this meant increased work and more responsibility without any real voice in what they thought was important. For example, one woman stated that:

I think that right now they've [management] gotten themselves in a predicament where they need people and they don't have them . . . I don't think you should be running flat out at a job and trying to teach somebody how to do it also.

In fact in our observations, reflections, and interviews we saw a consistent theme of work intensification. Clerical staff at the second site, for instance, were asked to develop and deliver training in their area of expertise without any adjustment to their ongoing job responsibilities. Moreover, the staff had no illusions about how their jobs were changing. All this discussion of empowerment and letting workers engage in the decision making process meant more work but with no recourse to refuse or even question the additional tasks and assignments and no organizational understanding of women's perceptions of their familial responsibilities. Our two research sites provided cases in point. In the factory, workers had just been trained in continuous quality, the expectation of teamwork and cooperation, and the value of loyalty to the company. However, one woman on second-shift was permitted to see her daughter - dressed and on her way to her high school prom - only during her regularly scheduled break time and in the factory cafeteria. At the second site, clerical workers discussed at length the work they now were required to do that had previously been done by professional staff and/or managers. Their additional duties were assigned without benefit of increased pay or even management's acknowledgement of their new responsibilities.

The feminist concept of voice becomes important at this point. In this environment the only acceptable voice is a cheerful, positive one. If a woman does not exhibit those kinds of attitudes and behaviors then she is seen as deficient as a team player, a non-cooperative individual, and an employee unwilling to take the additional responsibilities of increased worker decision making. These processes are, of course, defined by the organization and reinforced by HRD courses. Thus, after being told she had been enrolled in a transformational leadership class, one woman considered questioning the course's purpose and value but had second thoughts because " . . . again, still, and seemingly forever, I'm going to be seen as negative, cynical, skeptical, uncooperative and not a team player." Another worker, told that she was not a team player and needed to work on becoming a "cheerleader for management," commented sarcastically, " . . . guess I better break out the short skirt and pompoms."

As we were analyzing our data, several scenarios similar to those described above materialized. We began to connect these themes with feminist literature on work and learning.

Specifically, organizational flattening is part of the argument asserting that our educational systems, despite data showing workers are more highly educated than at any other time, are both the cause of and the solution to current economic issues. In particular, decision-making and continuous improvement processes located throughout this flatter organizational spectrum supposedly demand higher-skilled, better-educated workers even though the design and organization of work indicates growing numbers of de-skilled jobs which do not draw upon or emphasize the requirement, or human capacity, to think and reason (Cyert & Mowery, 1987; Hart, 1996).

Mechthild Hart's (1996) work is one source of scholarship that discussed these issues. Hart described the disturbing aspects of the feminization of poverty, particularly in terms of its relationship with the sexist division of labor. The problem, according to much of the mainstream business and HRD literature (Handy, 1984) consists of a poorly educated workforce exacerbated by the entry of a higher percentage of women, minorities and immigrants into the workforce. One implication is that with a lower percentage of white men in the workplace there is a less than adequate base of human capital to apply to the current issues and needs of American business. The implication, and the ideology, of this position is clearly that non-male and non-White workers are less valuable and an across-the-board equating of women's work with low-skilled labor. Ironically, skills attributed to women as "natural" (patience, attention to detail, manual dexterity) such as work with microchips, have now become viewed as higher-level skills, commonly compared to brain surgery, for which men are being retrained.

In addition, flatter organizations also have the effect of pushing more work to lower levels, levels where labor is cheaper and where the workforce becomes more polarized (Hart, 1996). Although some groups of women have found more highly-skilled work, many have been forced into lower-skilled minimum wage jobs. Gender, sexual orientation, age, class, and racial lines remain the points of polarization along with unequal distribution of skills, pay, and types of positions available (Hart, 1996; Schor, 1998). Our study suggests that HRD contributes to increasing the polarization through its deployment of generic skills in courses offered to workers. Examples of these types of courses include *Negaholics: How to Handle Negativity in the Workplace*, *Defining Your Role in a Changing Office Environment*, *Time Management: Regaining Control*, and *Thinking Power*. These classes, because they place the emphasis on the individual as deficient, help to create a docile, flexible, adjustable workforce that prepares workers to be resources rather than human beings. Furthermore, such classes devalue women's experience when they specifically describe women, particularly older women, as workers who resist change and insist upon maintaining and valuing their work-related experiences over generic skills, performance reviews, testing, and categorization of tasks. Modern work organizations devalue and attempt to discard workers' need for continuity, their rooting of work in life and personal experience, their sense of self, and a connection to others – all characteristics traditionally described as feminine. Employers often use training courses to help erase these characteristics. Moreover, training in new organizational structures, such as the flatter corporation with less-secure permanent positions and growing numbers of part-time jobs, helps to solidify worker expectations for low pay, poor work conditions, fewer benefits, increasing workloads, and lack of job security. According to Hart (1992), "the new workers will be 'working like women' whose 'flexible working patterns' have already made them into the preferred labor force in many instances" (p. 98-89). We saw a strong connection between our current research and what Handy (1984) noted 15 years ago: "It is ironic that just as women have begun to win their fight to lead the kinds of lives that men lead, those lives are beginning to shift towards the pattern from which women are escaping" (p. 162).

Our previous studies as well as this study exemplify some of these points. For example, at the manufacturing facility, testing, job re-evaluation, and training deployed via the HRD unit were used to further maximize profits by creating new job classifications that kept the mostly female workforce at near minimum wage levels. In another case, when the need for product dipped, senior workers, who had higher pay levels, were sent home while temporary workers, those with a lower hourly rate, continued on the job. In a third instance, two women juggling demanding full-time jobs and the raising of young children discussed the conflict they felt between the commitment to their jobs within a collaborative work team environment and the second job awaiting them at home each night. They commented that there was often more comfort and support within the work environment than they found at home, where they began their second full-time job at the end of the day, often stressed and always tired. Research conducted by Hochschild (1997) indicates that these are not unusual tensions, with parents often voluntarily working longer hours on the job or taking work home, resulting in *task interest* consuming larger segments of time and commitment. However, "volunteering" to work longer hours can be caused by more than simply finding the work environment more supportive than the challenge of raising a family.

Conclusions

We believe that our study raises some compelling concerns for those involved in HRD and workplace learning. We concur with others who have found the underlying concepts of HRD to be inherently anti-feminist and possibly anti-democratic (e.g., Butler, 1997; Calas & Smircich, 1993; Fenwick, 1998; Fletcher, 1994; Graham, 1995; Townley, 1994). Feminist theory and feminist pedagogies are antithetical to a practice that locates people within economic systems that see humans as resources. Thus attempting to place feminism in the context of HRD fails to address the fundamental challenges feminist scholarship poses to discursive practices located within a human capital approach to knowledge production. The feminist concept of voice is essentially absent in a workplace where an employee is afraid to question management decisions for fear of being labeled as not being a team player and where employees cannot bring their experiential knowledge to bear because it would be seen as resistance to organizational norms and practices. Although in HRD literature (Bierma, 1998) and in HRD classes the concept of voice, the acquisition of equality and agency, and the valuing of individual experience is occasionally recognized as a feminist construct, the effects of feminist theory in HRD are virtually non-existent. So-called feminism in HRD is constituted by conveniently adding feminine attributes and ways of knowing to traditional male roles and jobs. In HRD, the concept of voice is distorted because it obscures and deflects issues of power. HRD theory does not confront or challenge the centrality of power and its understanding of the concept of feminist theory is at best rhetorical and self-serving. Moreover, the rich ethnographies of women in the workplace reveal that many of the assumptions mainstream education, training and development hold about why women work and how women work in the office or on the shop floor are flawed. The very notion of who defines what productive work is, as well as how that work is rewarded, becomes central to any understanding of work and the role of knowledge production. Failure to tap into this research leaves human resource professionals and educators with an incomplete understanding of the relationship between work, gender, and knowledge production. Potentially this failure may also lead to designing workplace learning programs that have the unintended outcome of becoming oppressive systems, hidden in the rhetoric of so-called worker empowerment.

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Feminist Life Stories: Twelve Journeys Come Together at a Women's Center

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Abstract: This study explores the personal narratives of twelve self-proclaimed feminists who started a women's center in a small conservative mid-west town. Our common "herstories" are not identical but reveal learning experiences imbedded in our social and cultural contexts. These social and cultural contexts, however varied, held common threads of the pedagogies we experienced in formal and informal settings. These pedagogies held traditions that are often passed on without question because we are not always aware of their presence. The stories allowed us to reflect on the traditions in our lives in order to come to terms with our past and present realities. As we each learned to be girls, women and feminists, we accepted the rewards of connection and acknowledged the struggle for self-definition. This research chronicles the learning journeys we each took as we came of age in the 50s, 60s, and 70s.

This study began in 1993 when a women's center emerged in a small conservative college town in the mid-west. On a sunny September Saturday in a church basement, about twenty-five women gathered to share their dreams of a women's center. There was a mutual understanding of our collective knowledge that was revealed through our use of particular language and rituals to express our desires. Our methodology, though never formally named, was participatory and non-hierarchical. We did not pretend or claim to express the entire collective complexity of our unique individual experiences but through listening and collaboration we all felt nurtured. It was an implicit expectation that each person feel comfortable and that each of us be able to resonate with the sentiments that were ultimately expressed in a creative draft of a mission statement. The final statement contained drawings, poems, and words to convey deeply felt ideals and values.

Twelve volunteers left the church that day with the creative collage of words and pictures, destined to be our mission statement. We had the mandate of the group to make their collective vision a reality. We were eleven Euro-American women and one Mexican-American woman, well educated --seven masters degrees and five doctorates, women of privilege from the middle class. We were the new Board of Directors of a yet unnamed organization dedicated to establishing a space for women in our small enclave. Eight of us were primarily heterosexual and four of us were primarily lesbian. We ranged in age from 24 to 50 and we represented the careers of social worker, professor, counselor, psychologist, teacher, minister, student, consultant and mother. The development of our public voice was made easier by the fact that five of us had worked together on different projects over the years that had sought to improve life in our local community (Belenky, 1997, p. 9). We were all familiar because we shared an elite culture including language, education, and experience.

The membership reached 200 by the end of the first year; there was a building, a newsletter, a series of programs, and a strong commitment to the educative purpose embedded in the mission statement.

> *The mission of the Women's Center is to create a safe, supportive environment that celebrates women, promotes women's culture, and encourages the empowerment of women. We shall also work towards the elimination of sexism and other forms of oppression, particularly those based on race, national origin or color, class or economic status, sexual orientation, age, physical characteristics, or spiritual belief. (DeKalb Area women's Center{DAWC}Adopted January 1994)*

We wanted the women's center to be where individuals craft a sense of learning based on forging critical relationships with themselves, with others and with the world. We realized that the women's center was a small attempt to build community where learning is based in part on some of the life affirming and transforming experiences Mechthild Hart (1992, p. 213) asks us to give attention to: joy, pleasure, passion, creativity, art, and ritual. We wanted women to feel a certain freedom, along with a welcoming, nurturing warmth when they entered our portal. There were women's cultural events, a lending library, classes or workshops on topics of interest to women, a coffee shop atmosphere for women to meet in and rental of space to other community organizations. Art, music and performance quickly gained prominence in our schedule. As a result of a regional women's choral festival that we hosted our first year, a local chorus emerged by the name of "Bread and Roses". A new artist displaying works in many media transforms our on-stage gallery each month. A dance troupe from New York City has been in residence twice with workshops to coincide with a performance at the University. Finnish folk singers and unknown playwrights have used our space to extend their craft to the community. The Frida Kahlo Fiesta brought the whole neighborhood to our doorstep with a Marriachi Band playing into the humid summer night. The Ballet Folklorico of Mexico performed and shared a meal with the community in our hall before going on to the University.

It has been a little over five years since that first meeting in the church basement and the viability of the building and the organization is still debated. As with any young organization there are waves of involvement and commitment. The original twelve board members still wander in and out of the center's existence, serving on teams, offering advice and volunteering for different activities. Giving birth to an organization is much different than sustaining it. The life stories of these twelve women, who were not afraid to call themselves feminists and start an organization with a controversial mission, form the basis of my research.

Methods and Procedures

The initial purpose of this study was to explore through personal narratives the kind of feminist leadership that emerged in a small conservative mid-west town. To accomplish this task I collected the life stories of these "natural female leaders" who created a "small community where individual strengths are nurtured with emphasis on consensus and cooperation" (Belenky, Bond, & Weinstock, 1997). The center celebrates what Belenky and her colleagues call the female styles of leadership that flourish around kitchen tables and in church basements. Tables and basements is where we developed the bylaws of our new organization, where we held meetings and many of our first workshops and potlucks before we became tenant/owners of a building. As the interviews unfolded it became evident that it was important to document the process, the journey to feminism that we each took as we came of age during the first decades of the women's movement in the United States. My assumptions did not include a vision of a smooth ride to selfhood. The rich emotions, contradictions, and triumphs of the journey became the focus of the research. The importance of the study is not based on our uniqueness but what we share with other women in small towns across the country and the world. Our lives provide a small narrow window to the wider society where we live, grow, and interact (Hugo, 1996, p.38).

The significance of the collective life histories was to focus, as Sue Middleton (1993) did in her dissertation, on the historical and biographical circumstances in which the women who started the center began to identify themselves as feminists. I am not only the author of this study but also one of its subjects. It is a dual role I have been living since 1993. Even before we crafted the mission statement I let everyone know of my intention to chronicle our process for my dissertation. They all knew my theoretical orientation and I let them know of insights that emerged as I analyzed their life histories. Each woman supported me in my efforts and encouraged me to complete the research. They have cared and nurtured me in their own unique ways and celebrated the evolution of my topic. There was a spirit of collaboration and I felt that each and every story was truthful and valid. As Sue

Middleton expressed it (1993):

> Part of my thesis relied on people's descriptions and analysis of what had happened to them in their families and schools. It was possible for a woman to have been wrong in her interpretations of past events--for example, her mother's expectations, feelings or motives or a teacher's prejudices. However, these adult memories and interpretations were accepted as valid because the central concern in the study was not the events themselves but the interpretations the women made of them and the importance the women attached to these interpretations in their becoming feminists . . . (p. 68)

The interviews were long conversations with friends. They took place in living rooms, around dining room tables, and in big chairs in a sun drenched office. One interview was conducted in a coffee shop bakery and they all involved sipping and sometimes eating. There was nothing sterile about the encounters and comfort was never a concern. I had a steadfast commitment to confidentiality and I changed names and places to preserve it. There were no time constraints placed on the interviews and I let each person speak for as long as she wanted; most talked for three hours. No one needed much prompting to begin telling her story. I've always known that listening is one of my strengths and each narrative was a joy to receive. I felt honored to be let in on such fascinating lives with such reflective commentaries. According to Belenky (1997) and her fellow researchers this is quite consistent with the type of communication patterns that women develop "that emphasized listening and calls forth a highly collaborative dialogue" (p. 268).

Feminist Stories of Privilege, Resistance, and Learning

Through our storytelling we have invented pictures of our identities revealing life patterns of resistance, desires for social and personal transformation, strong senses of place, and feelings of spiritual location. Our narratives of self-transformation often invoke the dominant cultural ideologies of our time and then proceed to transgress or transcend them in a variety of ways as we try to arrive at a clear picture of our "feminist education". The introspection reveals how we each came to the feminist notion that women are oppressed and how that belief often becomes personal political practice. Through our resistance we attempt to struggle against social forms of oppression and we are transformed if and when we can fuse our political perspectives with our practice (Lewis, 1992). As we began to mature and gain an understanding of organized social practices and interests beyond ourselves we each tried to decide how to guide our intervention for the aim of social change and the eventual demise of inequality. Our collective insights at the women's center were theoretically sound but our alliance with all oppressed people from our privileged perch, did not, as Ellsworth, Min-ha, Gentile and others have noted, exempt us from confronting our ability to become the oppressor. It was Patti Lather who asks us "How do our very efforts to liberate perpetuate the dominance".

We are twelve well-educated middle-class women of privilege, but even our privilege when viewed through a feminist lens is not constant. In our stories there are instances where we are sometimes powerful and at other times powerless depending on the contextual situations imposed upon us. Researchers have shown that women are "simultaneously constrained and empowered by class and gender variables as they struggle to translate their education into collective action" (Hugo, 1996, p. 28). If it's not safe to be who we really are then the safest place to resist the hegemony and carefully reveal our resistance is in our stories and narratives. It is difficult to be a feminist in a conservative town where traditional, socially formed gender differences are rarely challenged and even more difficult to be a lesbian because sexual orientation is never mentioned without great emotional outbursts. Yet even when our privilege is challenged there is still refuge in our class and carefully constructed comfort zones.

In learning feminism, we struggled to unlearn key assumptions and assertions (Ellsworth, 1992). The society and culture where we reside construct these assumptions but never freely offer the tools to change or challenge them. Our stories are seldom if ever ours alone because they represent layers of meaning and interactions that can be subject to multiple readings. Our narratives are "unfinished, imperfect, limited, and partial...but we should read and critique them because they hold implications for other social movements and their struggles for self-definition" (Ellsworth, 1992). Even though we each claimed to be feminist, underneath each of our voices was a "teeth-gritting" and "often contradictory intersection of voices constituted by gender, race, class, ability, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or ideology" (Ellsworth, 1992).

The diverse personal and evolving perspectives reveal that even though the twelve of us believed we were feminists, our individual journeys were unique personal transformations. As women of privilege we shared an elite culture including language, education, and experience. We had a common ground from which to begin a quest, even though each person represents multiple communities of practice with complex commitments. Through our art exhibits, plays, cultural events, and celebrations we conveyed our belief in the human dignity and equality of all people. According to Simon (1992) we were looking to construct a "pedagogy of possibility, one intended to enhance the expression of human dignity and secure the renewal of life on our planet" (p. 151). We desired change, even if it was not tumultuous and instantaneous change. The gradual eventual changes in mindsets lend credence to the power of one individual and the ultimate power of many voices over time. When people use their collective voices and take action based on shared beliefs, then the change can be realized. Once again we found ourselves making critical assumptions that beg for evaluation. We naturally assumed because of our idealism that we could be emancipatory and try to create diversity by degrees...one little step at a time. The language of possibility was part of our middle-class lexicon. We knew that women have combined music, dance displays, art, readings, videos, theatre, workshops, and leisure in "imaginative modes of defiance: a weaving together of diverse learning moments toward the creation of a new sensibility" (Welton, 1993, p. 159). The new sensibility was our goal because it meant that we did not intend to be spectators but rather accept the responsibility inherent in the meaning we had ascribed to our past and present heritage (Simon, 1992, p. 153; Rowland-Serdar and Schwartz-Shea 1997, p. 224). Belenky (1997) and her colleagues would call our organization a "public homeplace" because we were committed to fostering the development of people and our community.

> "...'public homeplaces' are places where people support each other's development and where everyone is expected to participate in developing the homeplace. The members go on working to make the whole society more inclusive, nurturing, and responsive to development needs of all people--but especially those excluded and silenced." (p. 13)

Critical reflection on our process, our assumptions, our knowledge, our mission, our actions, and ourselves is an important component of the women's center. It is a constant struggle for us to confront privilege and work through it, acknowledging the contradictions in our lives. It is during times of reflection when some of us were able to gain critical insight and understanding of our privilege and acknowledge the dominance of white heterosexual, able-bodies, middle-class women. We were able to open ourselves and the center to the voices of working class, lesbian, non-white, varied abilities, and two-thirds world women. Plays, workshops, art exhibits, videos, and discussion groups formed the critical media for communicative action. We also became dedicated to the notion of accessibility for the center. We wanted every woman to see herself reflected in our programs and in our space. We believe that local struggles can contribute to positive social change. We believed that we were nudging social change a little further along a path guided by our mission.

The critical issue that the life histories reveal is found in what they do not disclose. The fact that even though we proclaimed liberal notions, our status of privilege sheltered us from really knowing oppression and gave us only glimpses of the realities of poor women and women of darker colors. We attempted academic solutions by sponsoring workshops on race and class issues and then wondered why we were the only ones who came. Our class, race, and gender dictated what we "saw as worthy of study and action" (Hugo, 1996, p. 39). Our ways of speaking and styles of discourse were products of our social location. Our successes have been when we've opened the doors to the whole community with cultural events involving families, music, dance, and especially food. Instead of woman to woman, these events were people to people. We weren't just providing uplift for the white middle class. Without knowing it, we were borrowing a tradition of the National Association of Colored women's Clubs (1896) whose motto was "Lifting as We Climb" (Davis, 1990, p. 4). Imbedded in this motto is the principle that the uplifting must "guarantee that all of our sisters, regardless of social class, and indeed all of our brothers, climb with us" (Davis, 1990, p.5). We are always learning and asking critical questions so that we don't reproduce those structured silences in our community that we can't see clearly through our privileged eyes.

Conclusion and Implications

I think that research should represent a beginning as well as the culmination of an important endeavor. Over the past five years people have been looking to me to ask the critical questions and chronicle our experience at the center. Whenever we reached a point of group consciousness, several women would look at me and say, "this story must be told". In completing this research I fulfilled the wishes of the women with whom I spent countless hours working to craft something special for women in our community. In telling our story I added to the collection of voices of women in various enclaves around the world. In accordance with the spirit of the "pedagogy of possibility" (Simon, 1992) the life histories seek to understand our presence in both historical and cosmic time. This research is important because we have "traditions with no name" (Belenky, 1997) that need to be documented. We don't know enough about how some women are transformed into feminists. The journey is not stagnant and probably never finished.

I hope to take what I learn from this study and see if similar or diverse voices are nearby or oceans away, to see if historical experiences can cross cultural boundaries and yield similar experiential transformation. I would very much like to study women's communities to see if collectively we have a message for adult educators, community organizers, and feminists. Learning from our narratives can only help the global efforts of women's struggle for justice. We do not see our efforts as extraordinary but we do recognize the strength of our collective actions for change. I would like to take what I learn from this research and see if other women's communities have similar stories. The goal is to share what we learn with others and never give up.

"When all women lift, the mountain will move." (Auluck-Wilson, 1992)

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Adult Meaning Making in the Undergraduate Classroom

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Abstract: This qualitative study explored adult student meaning making in an undergraduate classroom setting. Five key frames of meaning structures were delineated, suggesting highly complex and differing understandings of expert knowledge and adult learning engagement through classroom learning.

Background

How do adult students make meaning of their learning experiences in an undergraduate classroom setting? This study elicited learner beliefs and perspectives of classroom learning in relation to prior life experiences and life context, beliefs about the learner's perceived collegiate (institutional) involvement as it influenced classroom learning involvement, and beliefs and actions concerning learning expert knowledge structures (classroom context). Framed by a naturalistic inquiry process, it sought to illuminate the adult undergraduate sense of understanding and meaning of their experience.

This naturalistic inquiry gathered case study interviews, highly rich narratives of the adults' own sense of meaning and actions as learners, as undergraduate students, and as adults who maintained work, family, and community role involvements. These narratives were garnered from a semi-structured interview on the adult student's respective campus for about 1 1/2 to 2 hours in length. Two geographic locations, each encompassing three different postsecondary institutions [a private liberal arts college with an adult degree program, a public community college, and a public university] were selected for the research. A total of 90 adults at 6 sites were interviewed.

Interviewees were initially identified through a purposeful sampling strategy. The initial defining characteristics included: a) current enrollment, b) 30 years of age or older, and c) good academic standing having completed at least 15 hours of academic course work. The pool for interviewees were selected as a balanced representation according to gender; age, ethnicity/race; credit hours of enrollment; academic status; academic majors; and when possible, commuting distances. (Kasworm and Blowers, 1994).

Analysis of the data was grounded in inductive thematizing and categorizing of narrative data. Each case study interview provided both descriptive and analytic categories of adult student actions, beliefs, experiences, and judgements. Analysis was conducted by participant, by site, by institutional type, and as a cross-comparison across individuals and the three institutional types.

Adult Belief Structures of Engagement in Learning

Initial frames of engaging in formal learning and discipline content structures

How did adults construct and made meaning of undergraduate classroom learning? As students shared their journey of collegiate learning, it became evident that there were two broad levels of focus on learning engagement for adult learners in undergraduate environment. Drawing on the work of Rogoff and Lave (1984) and the more recent work of Lave and Wenger (1991) on everyday, situated cognition and learning, most adult students experienced an "apprenticeship" in the student role. Upon reaching success in meeting that apprenticeship, they then moved into a more in-depth approach to learning and to intersubjective meaning-making between their adult roles and classroom learning.

Apprenticeship in student role. At this first level of actions, the adult student constructed a world of learning by the rituals and routines of the classroom lectures, note taking, papers, examinations, and grades. These learners, because they had usually been outside of the collegiate setting for a period of time, focused their attention and meaning making on becoming the good and successful student. This apprenticeship role was also presented when adults accessed unknown, highly challenging academic discipline areas. As they "figured it out," they shared their understanding and their pride of expertise of this student role based in the language of the instructional culture. However, beyond their abilities to successfully model and conduct the student role, these adults were aware that they were different from others in the collegiate classroom. Their place within the classroom, their personal identity and their sense of having value in this academic culture reflected cultural artifacts [as defined through Vygotsky], socially negotiated beliefs and acts of meaning within the classroom transaction. For example, many of the adults spoke to the nature of a "comfort zone" established with the faculty member. This comfort zone was an implicit and often nonverbal set of faculty actions towards the specific adult student, the adult's sense of connectedness in the classroom through in-class group interactions, and faculty knowledge of individual student names. Many adults held a belief that sitting close to the front of the class established commitment and relationship to the instructor; this physical placement communicated that they cared about the class, the learning, and the instructor. Lastly, these adults often noted highly ritualistic actions that were believed to maximize learning recall and provide them the retention of information for class assignments and tests.

Constructing a learning world. Many of these adult students also spoke to operating at a second level--constructing a world of learning and of knowledge within the classroom. These individuals had moved beyond the apprenticeship role. They now opened up their minds to knowledge, skills, and beliefs that transected their life biography and course content. These individuals spoke to socially negotiated actions of connection or potential utility of the learning experience to the adult life context beyond the collegiate classroom. They also noted the potency and saliency of their life experiences for understand and making meaning of the classroom content. This second level had many variations in the nature of construction and direction, as will be seen in the following analysis of the five belief structures of engagement of learning.

At this second level, adult learners made subtle and complex metacognitive decisions about the approach to learning. These adult learners were active decision-makers regarding what materials should be learned at a surface level approach and what materials and ideas should be learned in an in-depth approach for long-term retention (Marton & Saljo, 1976). However, in these discussions, many adult learners linked these actions often to the nature and type of knowledge for the classroom and to their adult life worlds. They often conceived of their learning through "code word descriptors" of the nature and types of knowledge for the classroom and for their other life worlds. Some adult students differentiated between academic learning --learning in the classroom that included theory and memorization--and real world learning--learning which was directly part of the adult's daily actions in the world. Other students spoke to similar dichotomies between theory versus practical information, or between life experience learning and decontextualized facts, terms, and concepts. In whatever terms used for these two categories, they made key judgements and actions for their learning experiences through this meaning of knowledge connectedness to their sense of goals and purpose. They often spoke to either creating separate mental compartments or defining and judging their learning actions in one of these two different ways of learning. Adult workers seemed to express these dichotomies the most vividly. These adults came into the collegiate environment often deeply embedded within their particular work practice and actions. In their efforts to make sense and meaning of the course work and assignments relative to their real world involvement, students articulated this deeply felt difference between "academic learning" and "real learning." As stated by one student, "For myself personally [I try] to see if I'm really learning it for knowledge or just learning it for the class. You know how sometimes you can learn something and you just memorize it for the time..."

Beyond these two developmental levels of initial engagement in formal learning, there were five belief structures of learning actions delineated in this study. These belief structures represented "knowledge voices," which defined the individual's belief structure for making of meaning in undergraduate classroom learning. They reflected learners' perspectives of anchored meaning orientation in relation to these two knowledge worlds: the "academic world knowledge meanings" and the "adult life world knowledge meanings." For these individuals, learning for long-term retention was an internal judgmental act, mediated by their prior experiences and current life contexts. And it was also mediated by the learner's current beliefs about the efficacy of classroom knowledge learning for their present and future adult lives.

Belief Structures for Learning Action

Entry Voice. The Entry voice reflected a belief by adult students that they could not judge nor were able to make initial personal sense of classroom knowledge. Rather, they perceived the collegiate classroom learning transactions as a new and confusing culture of actions, words, and evaluative systems. These adult students assumed that they must memorize and be able to replicate the exact expert knowledge of the course discipline. They assumed that academic knowledge was different from real world knowledge; that these two knowledge categories represented two different worlds with fundamentally different ways of knowing and understanding.

In this voice, adult students suggested that collegiate expert knowledge structures, language, and inquiry were not part of their current life worlds. They had entered a new culture and were attempting to become socialized into these new rituals, language, and ways of thinking and making meaning. However, the culture of the classroom rarely verbalized or modeled the explicit understandings and ways to learn and perform in the classroom. Thus, the adult student presumed it was his or her responsibility to work hard and through those efforts to come to know and understand this new culture, its language, and its acceptable behaviors. In particular, these adult students expended significant efforts in analyzing fellow students and instructors to determine what are appropriate and acceptable behavior, language, and meanings. They usually created highly complex belief systems and rituals for becoming the "good student."

Outside Voice. Students who represented the Outside Voice brought a strong set of beliefs and actions that anchored them within their real world of work, family, and community life. They viewed college as often a necessary involvement for their future; however, college was characterized as a culturally unique place, with only fragmentary connection to the world of adult life and work. These individuals believed that academic knowledge was valuable, as long as it was anchored in their own worlds and reflected their perspectives of life and lived experience. Thus, these individuals selectively made meaning of classroom knowledge. Those areas of knowledge they would learn for retention (beyond the test or the quiz for short-term memory) focused upon 1) reinforcement of their current knowledge, 2) further illumination of past personal knowledge, and 3) validation of their knowledge expertise.

These students reflected a stance of judging their involvements in learning from outside of the academic world. They viewed it as an "academic game" of memorizing and acting on short-term recall to make acceptable grades. They spoke to highly selective actions and sets of judgements related to long-term retention and deep approaches to learning. These judgements were often based in their beliefs of their own current expertise knowledge in their practical worlds of actions. They recognized that the credential was necessary and that they needed to graduate from this undergraduate program; however, they saw much of the classroom as distance and detached knowledge often unconnected to the "real world." They also saw themselves as more expert and knowledgeable than did the endorsement of the academic world of course accrual and fulfillment of designated academic curricula. This particular group of people often questioned the logic of institutions that did not use assessment for equivalent life experiences for academic credit. They knew that they were more knowledgeable than their current academic transcript of course knowledge. Thus, in this voice, there were students who were open to engaging in academic knowledge; however, they engaging in knowledge which could have value for their real world actions.

Critical Voice. Adult learners in the Critical Voice suggested that they entered the collegiate environment from a private cynical stance. These learners attended college for highly focused reasons, to include: a) to get a credential as a "societal ticket" to access preferred jobs, b) as a necessary validation of expertise for job promotion or job security, or c) to resolve social pressures in either work or family settings for a college degree. They viewed the classroom as often a place of incompetent and unknowing faculty and a place for duped, naive, or trapped students. Thus, academic learning was judged to be a faculty-student game. In this game, these students were sideliners forced to participate through external compliance. They believed that valuable knowledge came from "real world experiences and action." These students rarely attempted to make meaning of the classroom learning environment. Many of the critical voice adult students expressed issues with their earlier and current schooling experiences. Part of this group had experienced poor grades or had flunked out in their earlier years. Some were currently experiencing problematic involvements with classes and were receiving lower grades than desired.

These students reflected an earlier pattern in my research, the "withdrawal pattern," identified in an exploration of self-directed action within the traditional undergraduate classroom environment (Kasworm, 1991). The students in this pattern outwardly conformed to the external boundaries and expectations of the formal classroom. They focused upon getting "good" grades and passing the tests, while maintaining as much psychological distance as was feasible from the faculty and the classroom experience. A key theme for these students was their significant feelings of incongruence and frustration due to receipt of lower grades (C,D,F) in courses. They could not visualize any other cause for their dilemma, other than assuming that the system was a crazy one, one that was a stacked deck against them. Many of these students suggested an approach-avoidance belief system for their involvement in the undergraduate classroom. This perspective was most evident by examples of passive resistance to the classroom experience. For these learners, their sense of self and learner role was caught up in a more dominant arena of loss of esteem, of feelings of vulnerability, and of a lack of connection between themselves and this "academic judging environment." They believed it was necessary for them to get the academic degree, but they totally disliked the academic culture and the tyranny of the grading structures.

Straddling Voice. Adult learners with a Straddling Voice valued both worlds of knowledge. They shared beliefs and actions towards connecting and acting on interfaces between academic and adult world knowledge. They viewed themselves as working across these two arenas of knowledge structures and articulated varied ways that they operated simultaneously and sequentially among two or three levels of self-defined knowledge structures. When they spoke of their classroom meaning-making, they often saw connections and meanings between academic learning and adult world learning. They believed that each world informed the other through new understandings and perspectives, new language, and new skills and insights for acting in their everyday world and their academic world. These adult students actively attempted to make applications and connections between these two worlds of collegiate learning and adult world living. They spoke of seeing new understandings or action of classroom learning for their family, work, and community lives. And they also utilized their knowledge and insights from their life roles for classroom understanding, elaboration, and illumination of academic knowledge. They made meaning through complementary use of intellect and action between these two knowledge structures.

Inclusion Voice. These adult learners were a unique breed of individuals who actively sought immersion into the academic world and academic knowledge. They suggested that through their academic learning, they had begun to see a new world-view perspective of their adult life knowledge. They actively spoke to building meaning bridges and creating an integration of thought and action between their life world outside the academy and their academic world of knowledge and understanding. Often, these individuals suggested that the dichotomized knowledge structures discussed by other groupings were understood by them; but they now saw it differently. Knowledge was not "different" by academic content versus application. Rather, knowledge of academic thought and of life actions all spoke to key meanings, understandings, and actions. Further, this group uniquely spoke to creating and generating new knowledge from these connections and integration of meaning and application. In essence, they acted upon their past and current knowledge and created new understandings and applications through all of their life knowledge and understandings. Many of the individuals in this voice suggested a valued deep immersion into the academic world of ideas and perspectives. They often spoke of a desire to both continue advanced work in graduate studies, and some suggested interest in pursuing a faculty career.

Implications

This study presents new evidence regarding adult learners' initial meaning making frames which organize their formal learning engagement, as well as identifying five differing knowledge voices of their judgements and actions regarding learning content in an undergraduate classroom. These findings suggest new descriptive understandings of the nature of learning involvement and meaning making by adult learners. Drawing upon prior work of a number of theorists, including Sternberg and Wagner (1986), Scribner (1986), Rogoff & Lave (1984), and Lave & Wenger (1991), these students suggest that learning engagement occurs through complex intersections of situated life contexts and personal meaning structures. Prior theorists have proposed that situated learning does occur in different ways from learning about propositional knowledge or constitutive knowledge structures (academic disciplinary knowledge instruction). This study examines the unique interactional role of learning academic knowledge structures through the eyes of adults embedded in significant life roles.

This study both supports and disputes the premise that adult learners engage in learning through problem-orientation or pragmatic applications. These findings suggest a more complex interrelationship mediated by the situatedness of learners and of their knowledge based in adult life roles, past schooling experiences, knowledge structures, and the classroom learning process. Clearly, these knowledge voices lend credence to the more significant complexity of situated cognition and its relationship to learning engagement and meaning-making through expert knowledge structures and intuitively known life world knowledge structures. Further research should explore these complexities and interrelationships. These findings suggest new implications for designing curricula and learning processes for adult students in undergraduate classrooms and suggest new research agendas related to formal instructional activities directed to adults in work and professional roles.

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Changing Languages, Cultures,and Self: The Adult ESL Experience of Perspective Transformation

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Abstract: Research was conducted among 208 adult ESL learners enrolled in college-based ESL programs. This study reveals that perspective transformation is frequently experienced in this context, and characterizes its nature. Implications for adult learning theory, education practice, and further research are discussed.

Introduction

Building upon Freire's groundbreaking literacy work (Freire, 1973), adult education has explored the changes which adults go through as they learn the written form of their language. More recently, Mezirow's work in perspective transformation has also been applied as a lens through which to view literacy learning experiences (Mezirow, 1990, 1996) and cultural change (Kennedy, 1994; Taylor, 1994, 1998). However, to date, there has been no research inquiry about perspective transformation among a diverse group of adult ESL (English as a second language) learners. The purpose of this study was to begin to fill that void.

The ESL adult education field has included literature that describes adult education principles, guidelines for practice, and some of the distinctive difficulties that adult ESL learners have in the classroom (California Department of Education, 1993; Wrigley & Guth, 1992). While these are very foundational and practical considerations, this research study focuses on the application of adult learning theory to practice. This study was undertaken in order to examine the experience of transformational learning among college-based adult (ESL) learners in order that adult educators may better understand and serve them. Three research questions were answered: (1) What proportion of the sampled population of adult ESL learners experienced a perspective transformation within the context of their education? (2) What common themes were evident in the perspective transformation experience among these adult ESL learners? and (3) What facilitates perspective transformation among adult ESL learners?

Background

Transformational learning is the process whereby adult learners critically examine their beliefs, assumptions, and values in light of acquiring new knowledge and begin a process of personal and social change. These changes result in a more comprehensive, yet differentiating frame of reference by which learners view and interpret their world (Mezirow, 1990. 1996). Similarly, it is recognized that the process of language acquisition can result in changes to an individual's identity and perspective (Brown, 1994; Poole, 1992). The "ideological model" of literacy extends the impact of literacy and ESL beyond the individual to social, political, and economic realities of society (Foster, 1997). In relation to these social changes, literature on acculturation issues and experiences describe some of the specific social changes that adult ESL learners experience (Brown, 1994; Wrigley & Guth, 1992). Bridging transformational learning theory with these perspectives of personal and social change stresses the integration of new learning with life experiences among adult ESL learners.

Research on perspective transformation has revealed changes among adult learners in many settings including cross-cultural settings, higher education, and medical rehabilitation (Taylor, 1998). Although educators know little about perspective transformation among adult

ESL learners, this research builds upon the literacy theoretical basis and perspective transformation research. (Brown, 1994; Foster, 1997; Jacobson, 1996; Taylor, 1994)

Research Method

The research was conducted primarily from a phenomenological perspective, as the researcher sought to understand the perspective transformation experience of the participants from their view. An assessment tool and interview format, "The Learning Activities Survey", that was developed in previous research (King, 1997, 1998a) was adapted for this use. This adaptation was the result of pilot studies with similarly college-based adult ESL learners. The final form of the assessment tool, "The Learning Activities Survey - ESL Format", included changes in vocabulary, the order of presentation of the questions, and specialized questions about perspective transformation and demographics that were pertinent to this study of adult ESL learners. The instrument includes objective and free response questions and has a follow-up interview format with additional questions.

Questionnaires and instructions were distributed in packets for each ESL class and when completed, they were returned to the researcher. During the initial analysis of these data, a "PT-Index" category is assigned to each completed questionnaire; this category is determined by an assessment of responses to five questions. A "PT-Index" category of "3" indicates having had a perspective transformation in regard to educational experience in adult ESL classes and a category "1" is for those who have not. Following this evaluation, a limited number of follow-up interviews were conducted in Spanish and English with those who had experienced a perspective transformation. This process was followed in order to supplement the survey data and verify initial data analysis. The final analysis of the data included individual effects, frequencies, proportions, correlations, and coding of free responses and interviews. While a causal-comparative model was used to identify any contribution learning activities (e.g., critical reflection, collaborative learning) might have to perspective transformation, a phenomenological perspective was used in the follow-up interviews in order to more fully understand the adults' learning experiences.

Description of the Sample

Two hundred and eight adult ESL learners from three different colleges' ESL programs in the New York City metropolitan area participated in this study. Intermediate and advanced ESL students were sought because of the required reading level to complete the instrument. As illustrated in Table 1, 75% of the respondents were between the ages of 18 and 29. In addition, 75.2% were single, 23.8% married, and 1% divorced or separated. Gender served as another descriptor; 63.9% of these participants were female, and the rest, 36.1% were male. Race identification was in four categories; these were white, non-Hispanic, 20.9%; Hispanic, 40.3%; black, non-Hispanic, 14.9%; Asian or Pacific Islander, 19.9% and 4.0% other. Countries of origin numbered 51, which may be described by geographical distribution as: South America and Latin America, 59%; Eastern Europe, 16.1%; Asia, 14.6%; Africa, 7.3%; Europe, 3%. Prior education levels of the respondents were dominated by "some elementary school" at 61.5% and "some university" at 22.5%. More than two-thirds(67.4%) of the respondents had been in ESL classes for 1 to 3 years, and the average time in the USA was 5.1 years. Generalizability beyond the scope of the stated demographics should be done with caution; this sample was primarily young, recently immigrated, and continuing in their studies as college-based ESL learners. A typical profile of a respondent in this study may be one of a single, Hispanic female in her 20's with "some" elementary schooling, who has emigrated from a Latin American country within the last 5 years.

Table 1
Age Range of Respondents

Age	n	Percent
<18	8	3.8
18-21	83	39.9
22-29	73	35.1
30-39	24	11.5
40-49	7	3.4
50-59	1	0.5
60-69	0	--
70+	0	--
Missing	12	5.8
N=208		

Findings and Discussion

The findings of this research have been extraordinary; while previous research among adult learners in higher education had demonstrated a 32.5% rate (N = 422) of experiencing transformational learning in relation to their educational studies (King, 1997), this most recent research among adult learners enrolled in college-based ESL programs demonstrates a 66.8% (N=208) rate of occurrence. These respondents widely identified with Mezirow's stages of perspective transformation as represented in the instrument and were eager to explain the changes they had experienced. In comparison to previous studies, (King, 1998b), their free responses were more plentiful and substantial, and the scope of the transformation was far-reaching as in the words of one participant, "What changed? My attitude, my personality, my behavior, my language, the way I act."

There were three themes of perspective transformation experiences recounted by the participants: language learning, cultural, and personal change. In each of these both instrumental and communicative learning were evidenced, and while both objective and subjective reframing were evident, the most vividly recounted were the personal examination and change inherent in subjective reframing (Mezirow, 1990, 1996).

One major theme of transformational learning was language learning; as the participants engaged in adult ESL classes, they changed their thoughts about learning the English language. Some of them thought English was easier and/or more enjoyable to learn than they expected, and others saw relationships of similarity or dissimilarity between their native language and English. This highlights the fact that adult ESL learners come to educational experiences with preconceived ideas about the English language and learning it, and that while it could be just objective reframing, instead the learners were engaged in evaluating their own assumptions and beliefs. The adult ESL learners who participated in this study evidently come from programs that are successful in overcoming these barriers and further research may reveal the reasons for their success in order to inform other ESL programs.

A second major theme of these responses, cultural changes, was also twofold in nature: learning the United States culture (acculturation) and developing intercultural awareness. The adult ESL learners were surprised that the American culture they were learning to cope with was different from what they had expected. For example, "My ESL classes help me to feel more comfortable in the US and the society. It also has changed my ideas about Americans;" and "I understand better the American culture, so that I see now the country, the USA, with another point of view. They have helped me to know my position in the society that I am living in. Because I'm learning the English language I've seen the country in a different way."

The learners repeatedly echoed another major development within their social and cultural understanding, they became more aware of and appreciative of people from other cultures. In the scope of perspective transformation, intercultural awareness is a significant breakthrough; these ESL classes were effective in helping to guide learners through this experience and they readily described the changes. "Sometimes our views was (sic) wrong on some ideas. After we discuss that we realize that our views is (sic) wrong. If we listen to someone else we also learn how to understand them better;" "In the ESL class we often talk about religion, people beliefs which made me change my opinion about others with different beliefs." And "I have become a more objective person since taking ESL - I believe that every religion, every culture, has a different way of thinking and are good like mine." The perspective transformations that comprise the cultural theme vary in several ways. In one respect, ideas about the American culture could be wedded to the individual or merely be a superficial opinion, and yet intercultural awareness and tolerance is deeply rooted within an individual (Brown, 1994). In addition, the intercultural awareness usually had more to do with interpersonal interactions and risky self-assessment, that the reshaping of ideas about American culture did not necessarily entail. However, all the accounts that were of a cultural theme were tied to preconceived ideas and beliefs about cultures, the learners had to face a disparity in their belief system, evaluate the difference, and make a decision to accept a new perspective. These are very vivid, classic examples of the kind of perspective transformations adult ESL learners experience.

The third theme of perspective transformation was in the scope of personal change. The adult ESL learners reported how they gained greater self-esteem and empowerment as they learned to cope with learning the new language and culture. This greater self-confidence affected what they did, how they related to others, and how they thought about themselves. "By learning the language I was capable to read papers and what is most important to understand them. So I could judge on what I see and read, instead of what I hear from others;" "Now I can understand the news on TV. I can go to different places and talk with other people. I feel different than before;" "I never thought I could study in an American University, now English has opened other doors for my future in this country. I say, if I want it, I can do it." One of the predominate goals of adult education is to empower adults, and this research demonstrates a clear manifestation of empowerment in adult ESL learning that promotes transformative learning.

Among the 139 adult ESL learners who had experienced a perspective transformation, the facilitators that they most frequently cited were discussion of concerns, 56.1%; class activities, 40.3%; essays, 38.8%; assigned readings, 36.0%; writing about concerns, 33.8%; group projects, 28.8%; personal journal, 28.1%; role plays, 16.5%; and worksheets, 15.8%. (It should be noted that since multiple learning activities could be selected, the percentages do not necessarily total 100%.) The participants cited which facilitators were available to them and which ones actually contributed to their perspective transformation experience. While these data do not mean that the ESL classroom alone may cause perspective transformation, they demonstrate adult ESL learners' perceptions that it has a contributing role in the experience.

Viewed in light of the themes of perspective transformation these adult learners described in their free-responses and interviews, one can see a complementary relationship with the learning activities. The adult ESL learners have documented that these specific learning activities contributed to the perspective transformation. It was through these learning activities that the ESL students were learning the new language, and also being changed in the dimensions of language, culture, and self. Nonetheless, a strict, isolated causal relationship between individual learning activities and perspective transformation is not proven. Many conditions and experiences contribute to a perspective transformation experience. However, learning activities have been focused on in this study, because relevant to the educational process, educators only have control over the classroom and what happens therein.

Finally, crosstabulations were evaluated between demographic information and experiences of perspective transformation ("PT-Index 1" and "PT-Index 3"). The Chi-square (X^2) values were determined in order to examine significant relationships between these variables. One modification of the original data was needed because statistically each cell of data needs to have a minimum of five members; the age, marital status, and education categories were redivided and coded in order to meet this condition. As can be seen in Table 2, none of the demographics were significant at the $p < .05$ level, thus, indicating that no relationship other than what could be caused by chance is apparent in the data.

Table 2
Chi-Square (X^2)Test of Demographic Measurements versus PT-Index 1 and 3

	Chi-Square (X^2)	df	Significance (2-sided)
Age	3.279	2	.194
Marital Status	1.814	1	.178
Race	7.259	4	.123
Gender	.459	1	.498
Education	1.845	3	.605

Implications

This research confirms that the adult ESL classroom is a place where much change occurs, and that perspective transformation theory provides a basis from which to view these changes. The changes identified were foundational not only to language acquisition, but also to the learner's understanding of culture and self. Critical to educational practice, these perspective transformation experiences underscore the fact that adult ESL learners have many needs and concerns. From the learners' accounts, the programs that they were enrolled in encouraged reflection, discussion, and critical thinking, and learning activities that were tied to these functions contributed to perspective transformation. However, it does not seem to be a sterile utilization of teaching techniques that contributed to these profound changes; instead, it was their use in this context of critically reflective thinking and discussion in a safe, supportive environment. The free-responses and interviews distinctly portray support of the person in the educational process.

Our classrooms can be changed by this research if we are ready to examine our educational practice. This research returns us to basic adult learning principles, such as recognizing the experience that adults bring to the classroom, creating a climate of respect, and active participation. Each of these ingredients are important in facilitating transformational learning and were portrayed in the accounts of the research participants. Adult educators can read these accounts and ask if this sort of change is happening among their students and how they can facilitate and support such significant learning.

The adult ESL classroom is rich territory within which to proceed with further adult learning and perspective transformation research. The changes among these learners occur more often and with deeper roots than in higher education in general (King, 1997, 1998b). Direction for such work may be in further characterizing the perspective transformation experience. We might ask: Because this experience is so pronounced within this setting, what may be evident that we could be missed in less dramatic change? The contributing role of learning activities may also be further examined. Why do the learners more often cite certain learning activities? What makes them successful in fostering perspective transformation? Revealing how adult ESL learning experiences contribute to perspective transformation may lead to structuring adult ESL classes and programs in new ways in order to support the learners.

Conclusion

Until now, there has been little research about perspective transformation among adult ESL learners. This study begins to offer some understanding of the breadth and depth of perspective transformation that these learners experience. Realizing that not only are adult learners learning a new language, but also changing their perspectives of language, the host culture, intercultural awareness, self-confidence and gaining empowerment, broadcasts the message that adult ESL learning is much more than what it appears at face value. Along the path of language acquisition, acculturation, and personal transformation ESL classes offer the opportunity for new beginnings and new dreams. In the words of one participant, "I changed my way of looking to the future. Before I didn't have a specific goal, and now I have it. I learned a new language and I could see that I could do more than I expected."

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A Sense of Place and the Rural Adult Learner

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Abstract: Confirming the importance of keeping the individual squarely at the center of the learning experience, this qualitative study of Montana ranchers describes how a sense of place, in this case an expansive rural landscape, provides Responsive Learners with a unique way of seeing, of communicating, of knowing, and of doing.

Introduction

Pervading human existence and exerting ties that none can forget, place along with its space, reflects those in its grasp and is reflected in them. In the process, it becomes more than an inanimate and passive backdrop. As American society has become increasingly less rooted, the separation between place and self has grown more evident. Wendell Berry (1977), who writes about the inextricable tie between American culture and agriculture, blames this trend on America separating the farmer from the land and thus separating America from its roots since the soil is "the great connector of lives" (p. 86). Increasingly, however, education is identified as a possible change agent to right the ills resulting from the divorce of Americans from place.

In Future Shock, Toffler (1972) describes the changes occurring in the modern world. However, Toffler's call to analyze acceleration and transience is like trying to saddle a galloping horse. It is both difficult to fully understand the ramifications of the rapidly shifting concepts and also impossible to slow the frame long enough to capture a clear picture for study. Rural Montana, isolated by geography and somewhat insulated from accelerated change, offers an endangered view of individuals who because of tradition are tied to a physical landscape, who because of distances nurture social networks, who because of their work are less linear and more holistic, who because of untrammeled space have a limitless framework in view, and who because of circumstances exert choices in their learning. These individuals' ways of seeing and pursuing learning are imperiled by a world filled with the rapid changes predicted by Toffler.

In this changing world, the impact of surroundings has grown increasingly important. Creators and builders of man-made environments are more aware of how their buildings impact the people in them. Preservationists emphasize the importance to society of saving natural and man-made landmarks because every place is imbued with emotional tone for the people there; and artists, writers, and philosophers have long referenced the powerful pull of the natural world.

Educators, too, look at the impact of surroundings on the individual, generally agreeing that two major forces, genetics and environment, shape the learner. However, there is ongoing discussion over the degree to which nature or nurture is at work. Context is seen as "not just an important element in thinking about human learning but is perhaps central to our understanding of adult cognition" (Wilson, 1993, p. 72) by those seeking further understanding of the tacit dimension of adult learning which "is gained through observation and experience, most of which is acquired in the everyday world" (Sisco, 1994, p. 182). A world of increasing linear specialization that is morphising with light speed ala Toffler makes it especially important to understand how personal landscapes exert their pull and how that influence is connected to learning. How does a sense of place actively shape those in its grasp by affecting not only how they see their world but also how they learn in that world?

Freire, with his views on the development of critical awareness and the use of slides to help the learner more objectively perceive the surrounding environment (Meirhenry, 1983) may hold keys to the answers. This is especially so if his concepts, along with art theories of perspective and space, are used as an overlayment for description of the process of learning in rural learners. At issue is rural adult learners' sense of critical awareness and their sense of place, for if their rural vista, which has formed how they see and learn, is altered overnight, what then happens to their way of learning?

Purpose

The purposes of this study were to describe (a) how rural adult learners perceive their landscapes and (b) how their landscapes through distances and untrammeled space have been an active force in their learning. Living close to the land, these individuals have developed a way of learning that works for their situation but which with alarming speed is threatened. The study examined how rural adult learners have developed a sense of place and how that has affected their way of learning in such issues as self-direction, the development of a more holistic view to learning, and the formation of networks.

This study in its look at how a sense of place impacts the adult learner also is a reminder of the impact of increasing shrinkage of space and the rapidly accelerating loss of personal landscapes. These two phenomena will continue to impact education at large, for cut loose from roots and traditional ways of living, individuals will increasingly need to be empowered to take control of their own learning. This study provides further information about the power of the individual learner and the role that learning plays in cementing a sense of connectedness.

Findings

Utilizing a descriptive design to collect qualitative data related to the learning patterns of rural Montana, 40 adults at 22 ranches in five of the least populous counties (less than one person per square mile) of Montana were interviewed on their land. The study examined how rural adult learners have developed a sense of place and how that has affected their way of learning. The findings revealed learners who are best described as Responsive Learners in tune with an expansive landscape. The Responsive Learner, who moves learning past reflection and into action through response, can be described in terms of five actions involved in the learning process: (a) framing reality (b) learning from and in the context of the land, (c) viewing learning as problem-solving, (d) thinking metaphorically, and (e) viewing the world holistically as a system.

Framing Reality

In order to better understand the nature of perspective and space, an artist utilizes a square viewer "to locate an object in space and thus see vertical, horizontal and proportional relationships" (Mendelowitz, 1976, p. 54). Such a frame helps to organize and define space. It also speaks to an individual's freedom to choose how to bound an area and begin to understand its balance (Arnheim, 1988). Just as an artist uses the slide to solve questions of position and perspective, the individual as part of any learning experience frames the situation so that in preparation for any action an objective view of the circumstances is gained. Framing reality then is another way of saying that they are "identifying the issue." Freire (1970), who believe that how people interpret their world is embedded in their reality and how they view it, used a slide as a frame to help students gain new perspectives about their world, a process he related to codification and conscientization.

In framing, perspective is gained, boundaries are drawn, focus is established and balance is achieved. Proud of their name "Flatlander," the Responsive Learners of eastern Montana talk about being able "to see forever," of having a favorite spot on top of a rise that gives them a view of never less than twenty miles and sometimes up to sixty miles in any one direction. The openness of view is more than aesthetic preference, for it also has the purpose of allowing the learner to see problems in time to remedy them. Most of the people interviewed (70%) indicated that the open view removed distractions and made it easier for them to focus on what they had to learn. The focus then becomes one's own responsibility with the learner not only framing individual reality but also holding control of the perspective.

Learning from the Context of the Land

Historian K. Ross Toole (1976) notes that rural Montanans have developed a special relationship over time with the land (p. 69)._Such Montanans are aware of the context in which they move, learning from that context in a circular way, which includes action-generating reflection that leads in turn to further response and action. A 50-year-old man said, "You have to find out who you are in the context of where you live."

All of the ranchers interviewed voiced their belief that living on the land and surviving in the life style has shaped the kind of learner that they are. Through necessity, they have become contextual learners, who do not simply exist in a place but who are intimately tied to the land. A 46-year-old woman described her relationship with the land in terms of the land teaching her: "I would also say the land itself teaches. Riding horseback. You learn to gauge and judge;" while a 65 year-old woman said that returning to the land had "cleared my head." For these people, contextual learning involves (a) close observation; (b) an open attitude to see alternative actions; (c) flexibility and adaptability to work with what the land offers; (d) the ability to cope with what is at hand in order to insure survival; (e) the commitment, persistence, and patience to see a situation through, and finally; (f) the self-confidence to act.

Learning as Problem-Solving

In addition to framing reality and learning in context, the Responsive Learner is also a problem solver. In fact, these individuals equate problem-solving with learning. Moreover, whether the problem solving is through insight or trial-and-error, the solution for these ranchers requires some type of action. Every day they are faced with a new set of problems that may bear only a slight resemblance to the issues of the day before.

In their learning process, these learners use several approaches. (a) They view change as a circular evolution, with themselves often the agents of change. Several individuals voiced the belief that, "The old becomes the new. " (b) Faced with daily change, these learners must access a wide range of information, so they gather their information in a number of ways that ranges from formal extension classes to the informal classes held over a cup of coffee in a diner with a salesman pushing liquid feed for cattle. (c) To help in the information gathering, these learners employ networks, much like those identified by Arlene Fingeret (1983) and which use what could be called the "pick-your-brains approach." However, these networks not only exist in the present, but also stretch back to the past, for they have evolved over time and include provisions for help in times of emergency such as prairie fires or illness. Intergenerational learning and neighbors gathering to learn from each other are part of this process which one 46 year-old woman called "the neighborliness of learning." (d) As self-directed learners, they use mentors and guides, serving as examples of how teachers need to "serve as a facilitator rather than as a repository of facts" (Conti, 1983, p. 63). (e) Because every situation and every ranch is unique, all pieces of information are considered and weighed against other information in a process resembling what Brookfield (1986) has called critical thinking. The final decision for action involves an element of experimentation, or as one 73 year-old rancher said, he learned from "blunder and error." (f) Of prime importance to Responsive Learners is having the freedom to direct their own learning and find the solutions to problems that lie in the context of their own existence. Mainstream America may view those in Montana as isolated, but as a 59-year-old rancher said, "It doesn't matter where you are -- this is the hub, the center." (g) The results of their problem-solving is evaluated through the land's productivity and the survival of their families not just in the present but into the future.

Thinking Metaphorically

In order to nurture the process of gathering information, reflecting and acting, a Responsive Learner often becomes a metaphorical thinker. A metaphorical thinker is an individual who when faced with a situation can pull two disparate ideas together and find the common threads that relate them. In this process a new idea is created.

The ranchers in this study live in a vast land, which itself becomes a metaphor for how they see the world. A 46-year-old woman said, "This is the land. The land is unchanging. It still is, and it will be. No matter what we do and no matter how great we think we are. It is still there." As these learners move and work in the vastness of such a landscape, their very survival depends on the originality and the accuracy with which they draw comparisons. Such metaphorical thinking manifests itself in (a) their identification with their place, (b) their view of the uniqueness of the individual whether it be land or person, (c) the creativity that manifests itself in their analytical thinking and its expression -- from poetry to the development of genetic lines in livestock, and (d) the diversity of their responses to situations, which are many times filled with humor, illustrated by an 80-year-old man's comment on his life, "It hasn't been all downhill and in the shade."

Viewing the World Holistically

A key characteristic of the Responsive Learner is the ability to think in terms of the whole instead of thinking linearly. Since Newton, Descartes, and Bacon, Western thought has been guided by the view of the world as a gigantic machine that is best understood by dissembling it and understanding each part (Capra, 1982). The sum of the parts creates the whole. The Responsive Learners of eastern Montana see the whole as inseparable, thinking more in terms of a circle of related systems than a line with a definite beginning and end.

Holistic thinking in these learners involves several elements. (a) The generational success of these families lies in how aware they are of all the systems that make up their world. They take in all pieces of information regarding their ranch and then treat it as a whole, coping with a multitude of projects at once. (b) The systems they see as part of a whole are ever moving and changing, stretching back into time and forward into the future. In fact, they call their land "Next Year Country," for next year always holds the opportunity for something better. (c) One of the most important systems in their world is the community. A 46-year-old woman said, "People make the land; the land makes the people." Perhaps this belief is why one of the recurring questions raised was where the next generation of ranchers will come from: "How do we keep kids on ranches in Montana?" (d) Working the land, these learners have become so rooted in their place that, as one man's wife said, "He's really tied to the land in so many ways that it's hard to differentiate what's the land and what isn't." These ranchers see the land forming a system, the community of people forming a system, and the two intersecting through the individual. (e) As part of seeing the whole and of understanding the inter-workings of the system around them, these learners have an understanding of their own small role in the whole drama. A 46 year-old woman said, "Having grown up here in this wide open country, it makes you less selfish; it makes you more aware of the bigger things in life, the bigger part of life."

Conclusion

In addition to describing the Responsive Learner, the data from this study led to the following conclusions: (a) Rootedness, or a sense of place, plays a role in learning by providing a context for the Responsive Learner and by furnishing a frame or focus for use in the learning process; (b) learning in the context of the land involves systems thinking and a holistic approach as opposed to the more linear approaches of traditional thinking; (c) rootedness is related to "centeredness," for the individuals in this study are not only centered and at one with the land but also are at the center of the learning experience; (d) learning for the Responsive Learners in this study is an individual experience that grows out of, takes on meaning from, and is fed by their context which includes their culture; and (e) the Responsive Learner is not only part of but also is at the center of a web of separate and specialized networks, in which some stretch back to the past, but in which all supply the learner with information, support, guidance, and vision.

The conclusions formed by this study of Responsive Learners indicate that their relationship with the land provides them with a unique way of seeing, of communicating, of knowing, and of doing. Despite their ability to change and survive, these Responsive Learners' way of life is threatened by outside pressures over which they have no control. If their way of life does not survive, society as a whole will lose a special breed of learner, while also losing a window on better understanding a learning process that is so naturally a part of humanness that it is often over looked. Adult educators can play a major role in disseminating the benefits of this learning mode which puts the individual squarely at the center of the learning experience, and Responsive Learners can serve as reminders of Myles Horton's Highlander axiom, "Learn from the people; start their education where they are" (Adams, 1975, p. 206).

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Collaborative Ways of Knowing: Storytelling, Metaphor and the Emergence of the Collaborative Self

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Abstract: This study explores collaborative inquiry as a research methodology through an examination of the processes employed by the co-researchers. The paper describes metaphor and storytelling, two heuristics that assisted in the collection and analysis of data and discusses the role of the collaborative relationship in the construction of knowledge.

Introduction

Collaborative learning, co-operative learning, team-based learning, learning organizations, community development, communities of practice: the terminology has pervaded our schools, institutions of higher learning, businesses and community based organizations. Paradoxically, we live in a culture where individualism still reigns supreme. This is especially evident in higher education. Collaborative publications are often discounted in tenure and promotion decisions. Doctoral dissertations must have a singular author in most universities. Collaboratively produced knowledge is often misunderstood, overlooked, or seen as subordinate to individually produced knowledge.

Fortunately, adult educators from a variety of frameworks have begun to challenge the dominant societal paradigm which privileges individualism while placing less value on contributions by groups. Africentric and feminist pedagogies as well as Native American traditions place high value on collective knowledge through the sharing of rich stories and the cultivation of relationships.

A primary purpose of this study was to articulate a lesser known methodology for conducting research in adult education. Through our study of collaborative inquiry we consistently made use of strategies from these oral traditions (such as storytelling and creating metaphors from our experiences) which shed light on a method of inquiry which values collaborative ways of knowing.

Theoretical Framework

This study builds on the existing knowledge of collaborative inquiry process as documented by The Group for Collaborative Inquiry (1993), Kasl, Dechant and Marsick (1993), Torbert (1981), and cooperative inquiry (Heron, 1996). The literature on collaborative learning as the social construction of knowledge (Bruffee, 1994) also contributes to the basis for this work. Freire's (1973) perspectives on the dialectical relationship between the knower and known and dialogue as a vehicle for knowledge construction significantly ground this research.

Research Design

A primary purpose of collaborative inquiry is to deepen the understanding of one's experience, to gain an understanding of and from fellow inquirers, and together develop new understanding of some shared phenomena. This research asked the questions: What is the nature of collaborative inquiry, and, how do we experience and express it as co-researchers? Our intent was to understand the meaning of collaborative inquiry as a phenomenon, using our own autobiographies as a starting point (which meant we were simultaneously researchers and subjects of the research) and explore the social significance of collaborative research. Since the inquiry began with ourselves as co-inquirers we believed an eclectic approach would best serve our needs.

Our methodology draws on phenomenology; deepening our level of consciousness through seeing, intuiting and reflecting upon our everyday lived experiences, heuristic research "a research approach which encourages an individual to discover, and methods which enable him to investigate further by himself," (Moustakas, 1981. p.207) and participatory research "Inquiry as a means by which people engage together to explore some significant aspect of their lives, to understand it better and to transform their actions so as to meet their purposes more fully." (Reason, 1994 p.1)

Because we were investigating our own process, we used dialogue, or deep critical conversation as our primary data collection method. Throughout this dialogue process, ideas emerged, were articulated, shared, listened to, responded to, built upon, challenged, re-thought, clarified, validated, changed and expanded. Data collection and analysis involved several iterations of reflection and dialogue (individual reflective writing, written reflection on each other's writing and face to face conversations).

Heron (1996) discusses the use of presentational methods in the inquiry process. At times we have used graphics, drawing, photographs and music to articulate our understanding of phenomena to one another and together make sense of our experiences. We have found the sharing and creating of metaphors and stories to be especially useful tools for clarifying understanding and creating collaborative knowledge.

Storytelling

The use of story transcends time and place. It has been vital to the transmission of social knowledge in primarily oral cultures from one generation to the next. Moreover, knowledge is created and interpreted through stories being told, discussed and told again. This section of the paper describes the role of storytelling in our process. Both individual and collaborative stories of the co-inquirers have significant influence.

Storytelling among collaborators provides fertile soil where the collective knowledge takes root. Relationship building is facilitated as co-inquirers reveal dimensions of themselves. Potential sources for new data come through incidental learning associated with the relating of and exploring the meaning contexts within the stories. (Mealman, 1993) Tacit ways of knowing are valued and nurtured.

> We had prepared two proposals for presentations at an international conference on experiential learning. We felt fairly confident that we would be accepted because we had substantial experience drawing on experiential learning in cohort based learning contexts. The good news was that our 'presentations' were accepted but we were assigned round table and poster sessions rather than the workshop styles we had requested. This challenge, while initially frustrating, provided us with the opportunity to delve further into the content. What we discovered or observed from our interaction was that a new creative process or force emerged. Almost by accident we ended up understanding our material in more depth since we had to re-frame our knowledge to be shared in a context which posed new challenges.

We created a story about our experience in an attempt to understand and articulate it to others. We have since reflected on and shared this story in several presentations as a way to introduce how we began to investigate our own collaborative process.

Many times in our research dialogue we found ourselves sharing aspects of our personal lives that at first appeared unrelated to the specific project. This story provides a flavor of those moments:

> Sitting at a table at Bean Wilde (a local coffee house), Craig's eyes shift to the ceiling; his attention returns to his collaborator Randee, who has waited patiently while he has taken a mental leave. Craig relates the following: "During this last drive back from Wisconsin to Illinois I stopped by a rest area. After I took care of my business, I wandered off into the woods and found a little traveled trail. I needed the exercise, so I followed the trail for awhile and it led to a rock outcropping. I found my way up and through the rocks to a place about 100 ft above the path. On top there was another, more well worn path. Towering pines graced the area. I was amazed that this place had been here all along and I had never bothered to venture here before, even though I had stopped at this place dozens of times. I continued along the upper path relishing the breath taking views over central Wisconsin. The fragrance of the pines and warmth of the rocks on my back provided a renewing and refreshing spa." We then chatted some about my find, this place, and how my experience related to my life and ultimately to our research project.

This story illustrates a common phenomena of allowing seemingly unrelated conversation to be part of our routine inquiry process. We discovered that experiences and stories have often emerged from the periphery, and as we pay attention to them we find that they have significance to our research. As Drake, Elliott and Castle (1993) related, "we soon recognized that we were talking about the fabric of our lives at the same time that we were talking about research. It became clear that our researcher selves and our personal selves were not to be separated." (p. 294)

Individual stories often evolve into collaborative stories. Randee relates:

"Two years ago, while sitting on a rock overlooking a mountain lake in Colorado, I read a book called Photography and the Art of Seeing . . . . ."

She excitedly goes on to describe how the book helped her to take better photographs by immersing her total self into the experience and learning to remove barriers to seeing. At that time we were working on a project about seizing learning opportunities and Randee felt compelled to share this story since it seemed to relate to the inquiry in some way that was not totally clear. As she shared the story with Craig, he immediately was able to make the connections even from the standpoint of a non photographer. His enthusiasm inspired both of us to look deeper into the concepts which ultimately became one framework for a paper based on our research. We created another shared story which became data for our exploration into the dimensions of collaborative inquiry. We began to experiment with telling the story in workshops that we facilitated and as a way to help graduate students understand ways of viewing research. The story continued to be reshaped based upon our individual and collective telling of it and has become one focal point for expression of our research.

Collaborative inquiry as a research process is holistic in nature. The sharing of individual stories and development of collaborative stories grounds us in our humanness. The interconnectedness of our individual lives to other circles, including both people and phenomena, is crucial to our own ways of knowing. Collaborative inquiry, as we have lived it, draws freely from and is expressed through these experiential domains of being in the world. It is somewhat like crossing a veil into another world of knowing.

Through the use of stories, other dimensions of the experiential domain are tapped. Marsick and Watkins (1990) have identified this element of tapping experience as creativity "which enables people to think beyond the point of view they normally hold" and to "break out of preconceived patterns that do not allow him or her to frame the situation differently, or even to see a situation as in need of reframing." (p. 30) They go on to add that this form of creativity "allows people to play with ideas so that they can explore possibilities without censoring themselves or being censored by others." (1990, p. 30) We have found that storytelling provides a natural way for this process to be facilitated. The meaning of experiential learning can thus be defined "as the way people make sense of situations they encounter in their daily lives" (p.15). While Marsick and Watkins see incidental learning as primarily a by-product of some other activity, Mealman (1993) strongly linked experiential and incidental learning together. Mealman discovered that incidental learning may take on a value of at least equal to or even greater than the intended formal learning. In the case of focused inquiry this may mean the value added by stories and metaphor (which often enter the process as incidental happenings) can be substantial. In our inquiry process, we have regularly made the space and time available to shift the focus to what may initially seem extraneous such as the sharing of stories from our experience. Using a hermeneutic process, we respond to one another's stories using "replies, echoes, re-creations, and reflections" (Reason and Hawkins, 1998). Meaning is thus derived through this form of reflection on experience. Storytelling contributes a vital life force in our collaborative process.

Metaphor

Metaphors serve multiple purposes in our collaborative inquiry. We use metaphors to access our individual knowledge and to communicate that knowledge to each other. Similar to Deshler's (1990) model for metaphor analysis as a tool for critical reflection and transformative learning, we develop metaphors and then engage in cycles of dialogue and reflection (data collection and analysis) for the purpose of "unpacking the meaning perspectives of a metaphor" (p. 299), collectively reflecting on its assumptions and values, filtering the metaphor through our individual and collective experiences, and adapting the metaphor or creating new metaphors based on our analysis to explore phenomena together and thus deepen our understanding. This interpretation and exploration of metaphor along with other forms of communication serves to create new knowledge.

Metaphors emerge from a variety of different contexts: through our individual experiences, through shared experiences, and through our dialogue. Sometimes the metaphors come from other sources such as literature, other individuals, or observation of our surroundings. We have also discovered metaphors related to our work by looking at artwork, photography or listening to music. At times the metaphors have emerged during periods of incubation when we were not directly working on our inquiry. In the following paragraphs we illustrate the origins of some of the metaphors we have found useful. We will then discuss the roles that metaphors serve in our inquiry and describe some ways in which we work with them.

One source of metaphor comes from individual experience. On a camping trip in northern Michigan, Randee was struck by the colorful brilliance of the Black Eyed Susans that were growing wild in the area. She wanted to photograph the flowers in as many ways as possible but realized that perception was limited, even with a telephoto lens. She found herself climbing on tables to get a "birds-eye view" and even lying down on the ground to see the underneath side of the flowers.

At this time we were involved in a collaborative inquiry project about learning in groups. We had been working with a concept called "varied vision" (Tom Brown, personal communication. 1992) which was about seeing from different perspectives. As we considered the metaphor of the Black-Eyed Susans we realized there were implications for how people could enhance their skills for learning in groups (Mealman and Lawrence, in press) by temporarily putting themselves in awkward or uncomfortable positions to understand a different perspective. We have also found this process useful in our own practice of collaborative inquiry to make sure that all perspectives are comprehended. (Mealman and Lawrence, 1998)

Sometimes the metaphors emerge from seemingly unrelated sources. As we were working on our paper on group learning at a lakeside cabin, we happened to notice a great blue heron outside the window. Instead of dismissing the heron as a distraction to our work we decided to go outside for a better view. We went for a camera in an attempt to photograph the heron; however just as we returned, the heron spread it's wings and took off in flight. The photographic opportunity was lost. We realized the importance of seizing opportunities as they occur since many such opportunities are fleeting. As we considered our work with groups and helping people to see opportunities to collaborate, the experience with the heron became a metaphor to help us understand the timeliness of relating to others' experiences in collaborative groups.

Metaphors play multiple roles in our inquiry process: Transcending mere words they assist in our communication process by deepening, clarifying, understanding and expressing knowledge. Metaphors communicate areas of interest and passion and spark shared passion. They allow us to see from perspectives previously inaccessible. They offer ways to grapple with questions that arise. Finally, metaphors help us to understand our own process of collaborative inquiry.

One strength of the collaborative process is that often a metaphor will present itself to one collaborator that would never have been evident to the other, since it is out of the realm of his or her experience. By remaining open to divergent views, acknowledging that our own knowledge base may be limited by our socio-cultural background and experiences, and becoming open to seeing from another's frame, opportunities to extend knowledge are created. For example, Craig introduced metaphors from animal tracking and his work with Tom Brown in his wilderness and nature school. Randee would have never considered such metaphors since they were not part of her previous knowledge or experience base. Although she'd had many outdoor experiences in wilderness settings, she was raised to believe that activities such as hunting and tracking from ancient times to the present were in the realm of experience of men only. Certainly the models were all males. She probably would not have made these connections had Craig not brought them to her attention. Rather than rejecting the metaphor she began to consider its possibilities. This example clearly points out the advantage in collaborating across gender, race or other areas of postionality.

Sometimes creating a metaphor helps us grapple with difficult questions or helps to clarify a perspective that we have come to hold. One question that often arises with people who do collaborative inquiry is how they can work collaboratively without losing their individual voice. We created a metaphor of a rope to help us understand and articulate our understanding. "Like a rope made up of individual threads we can be pulled apart and retain our individual uniqueness. However, entwined together, the rope has more strength. Rather than losing our selves to the collaboration, we found a stronger self." (Mealman and Lawrence, 1998, p.138)

We work with metaphors throughout our dialogue process. By building on and attempting to understand each other's metaphors we often come to a position of greater clarity. In Craig's search to apply some of the concepts he had learned from Tom Brown to his work with students in collaborative learning groups, he introduced a concept known as "deadspace". This area of space which is present but unseen in our conscious awareness was difficult to grasp at first. Randee tried to find ways to apply it to her known experience but quickly became frustrated when she couldn't quite get it. It seems like Craig was also frustrated because of his inability to articulate it in a way Randee could understand. In dialogue, Randee began to make connections with her work in photography and how things sometimes appear in pictures that we don't see when we are taking them because we are focused only on the main subject. As we explored this idea further, it eventually led to greater clarity of understanding for both. We saw how deadspace could become a barrier to collaboration if we focused too narrowly and ignored certain contributions.

Often we incorporate a spirit of playfulness into our inquiry through our use of metaphors. We were both familiar with the expression "half baked idea" and agreed that it was an excellent way to describe how we introduce ideas into our dialogues that are only partially formed, and together work at further developing the ideas. We started playing around with notions of baking ideas, much in the same way one bakes bread: adding yeast, allowing the ideas to rise, kneading, baking and transforming them in the process.

As we work with our individual and mutually created metaphors we continue a dialogue which results in the creation of new knowledge. The result is a mutual interpretation that is shaped, molded, expanded, extended and stretched in a fluid motion somewhat like the creative process in interpretive dance.

Collaborative Self

The collaborative self is our terminology for the collective identity that develops in collaborative relationships (Mealman and Lawrence, 1998). It has alternately been labeled the social mind (Goulet, Krentz and Christiansen, personal communication, 1999) or "we" defined as "a union that is greater than the two parts that composed it." (Hughes and Lund, 1994 p. 49) The collaborative self evolves through the cycles of dialogue and reflection around salient themes that emerge from the data.

The collaborative self includes our individual selves (our subjectivity). It also includes parts of ourselves that are shared, mutually known and commonly experienced (inter-subjectivity). Through the collaborative relationship a new self emerges which is synergistic. It is greater than the sum of our individual selves. The collaborative self is characterized by its own language including words, phrases, shared stories and metaphors. It holds the shared knowledge of the group.

Part of our process involved assigning ourselves sections to individually develop. When we sat down to write the individual pieces, we discovered that what we wrote, individually, came out of our many conversations which contained both of our contributions, regardless of who was putting the words down on paper. We developed a collaborative voice which was made up of our individual voices, yet had a distinct sound all of its own like singers who harmonize together. Creating a collaborative voice required that we leave open space for co-creation which often meant relinquishing individual conceptual notions. In doing so, we discovered that not only had our individual voices not been extinguished, we had found a stronger voice.

Conclusions

Collaboration is central to the work of adult educators in a variety of contexts. Understanding of how knowledge is created collectively is at the very core of an empancipatory pedagogy. Incorporating the use of metaphors and storytelling in collaborative inquiry can play a significant role in the construction of new knowledge. Collaborative inquiry offers expanded opportunities for accessing and analyzing data through the sharing of the metaphors and stories. Through hermeneutic dialogue processes, we explore and probe for meaning and create new meaning. Stories and metaphors hold shared knowledge which is located in and articulated through the collaborative self. Storytelling and metaphors express the vitality and richness of collaborative inquiry.

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The Role of Cultural Values in the Interpretation of Significant Life Experiences

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Abstract: Researchers in adult education have investigated the phenomenon of meaning-making for decades. However, majority of studies mainly focus on the psychological process of meaning-making, rather than examining how contextual elements, especially cultural values, affect the process of interpretation. The purpose of this study was to explore the role of cultural values in the interpretation of significant life experiences as perceived by Taiwanese Chinese in the U. S.

Introduction

The essential feature of every significant life experience is that it has meaning. Meaning-making addresses the ultimate concerns about the purpose of life, strengthens our endurance during hardship, and provides opportunities for significant learning and development in adulthood (Courtenay & Truluck, 1995). Meaning-making is the center of human experiences and the most fundamental human activity. Several writers have explicitly made the linkage between meaning-making and learning, especially learning from experience in adulthood (Jarvis, 1992; Mezirow, 1991). They argue that learning occurs when an experience is attended to, reflected on, and made sense of. In other words, learning from life experience is a process of interpreting, or making meaning of one's experiences.

In the field of education in general as well as in adult education, writers have discussed and delineated the process of learning from life experiences for decades. Dewey(1938), Piaget(1966), and Kolb(1984) all have explored the role that life experiences play in formulating a learning process. In adult education, Bould et al.(1993), Boyd and Fales(1983), and Miller(1994) have also uncovered the detailed process of learning from life experiences in various contexts. Mezirow(1991), Kegan(1982), and Daloz(1986) have further made the connections between adult development, adult learning, and meaning-making. These theories together present a clearer portrait of the process of interpreting life experiences

Although many have explored the process of meaning-making, the attention of most of the writers is disproportionately paid to learners' internal change as opposed to the contextual influences in shaping the interpretation process (Clark & Wilson, 1991; Jarvis, 1992). The impact of context on the process of learning from life experiences has been mentioned by many but just how a process is affected by context has been investigated by only a few (Clark, 1991).

Cultural values, as an important part of context, has hardly been focused on in studies of adult learning. However, when closely examining the process of learning from life experiences, it is obvious that the whole interpretation process, including the experience that one has, the context in which the experience is constructed, and the interpretation the person makes out of the experience are all culturally shaped. Yet, under the influence of enculturalization since birth, most people merely act out the internalized cultural values, with little realization of the extent to which cultural values affect their everyday lives. Therefore, this very culturally embedded nature of meaning-making process is always taken for granted and rendered invisible.

A cultural value is an emotionally charged concept, a recognized standard, or a core belief, which serves as a general rule and forceful goal to direct people's thought, perception, and behavior (Quinn& Holland, 1992). As Goodenough explained it, individuals, since early childhood, have been taught "the standards for deciding what is, standards for deciding what can be, standards for deciding how one feels about it, standards for deciding what to do about it and standards for deciding how to go about doing it" (1971, p.19). In other words, cultural values, by framing our ways of perceiving, relating, reflecting and evaluating, can largely condition the meaning made out of our experiences.

While the assumption that learning as a culturally constructed process has been widely shared among adult education researchers, our understanding about how in fact cultural values affect the process of interpreting life experience is still limited to a few studies of classroom behaviors (Hvitfeldt, 1986; Merriam & Caffarella, 1991; Pratt, 1990). Most writers in adult education, while pointing out the significance of cultural values on learning, have at the same time focused on the psychological changes relative to the process of interpretation. Therefore, this study seeks to understand the role of cultural values in shaping the process of interpreting life experience as perceived by Taiwanese Chinese people in the U. S.

Methodology

A phenomenological study design was considered the most suitable for this study because it not only allowed the researcher to explore and understand the meaning that people make out of their own experiences, but also served to keep the researcher from projecting one's own judgments toward the phenomenon under study (Moustakas, 1994). The goal of doing the phenomenological study is to understand and delineate the phenomenon as subjectively experienced by the participants.

A nonrandom, purposeful sampling was used to select participants for the study. The reasons of targeting the Taiwanese Chinese in the U. S. as research participants are two-folded: Firstly, the cultural background I shared with the participants provided me a common ground to empathetically understand their meaning-making process and, secondly, being exposed to the foreign culture, these participants appear to be more sensitive to their home cultural values.

Three criteria were determined for sample selections : 1) the participants needed to have been brought up and lived at least twenty-five years in Taiwan to ensure the impact of Chinese cultural values; 2) the participants needed to be able to articulate an experienced significant life event; and 3) the participants needed to represent a range of educational background, age, and significant life experiences to increase the diversity of the sample and to ensure a common process of interpretation would not be caused by the effect of one particular experience.

Eleven participants located through informal networks in the local community were interviewed in Chinese to ensure their capability to freely and fully express themselves. There were six women and five men, ranging in age from 26 to 44. Six of the participants reported on an education related experience, two spoke of relational events, and one each referred to a family crisis and a relocation experience.

Phenomenological analysis is used to analyze data obtained by in-depth interviews. Member-check, data-triangulation, peer-debriefing, including English-Chinese translation consultation, were employed to increase the trustworthiness of this inquiry (Merriam, 1988).

Findings

Three major areas of findings emerged from the data analysis: (1) the specific cultural values which affect the process of interpretation; (2) the process of interpreting life experiences; and (3) the role of cultural value in shaping the process of interpretation.

Finding I: The four Chinese cultural values addressed by most participants were: *respecting authority, maintaining harmony, valuing education and degrees*, and *putting men above women*.

Respecting Authority perpetuates every social context in the Chinese society. Factors like age, gender, and seniority intertwine to define individual status and interpersonal relationship. Not only are the authority figures entitled to respect and submission from their subordinates, but also the former are responsible for the protection and well-being of the latter. Authority figures, especially parents, are usually strongly and actively involved in their subordinates' decision-making. Su-hui, the women returning to school for her doctoral degree, remembered her father's parenting style: "My father was indeed in charge of my elder brothers' lives. For example, they were asked to listen to my father completely; they would follow whatever his commands were. They were expected to obey his orders, his wishes." Even though parents' involvement and interference is viewed as dominant and decisive, it is also perceived to be based on the consideration of the best interests of their children. Steve, who was forced by his parents to break up with his girlfriend, commented on his parents' involvement; "As Chinese parents, I guessed their concerns were correct; they only wanted me to have a better life."

Maintaining Harmony is usually used to characterize the ideal interpersonal relation in Chinese culture. Individuals usually try hard to reserve selves, get along with others, and avoid any behaviors leading to face-loss, which would be collectively shared by the whole group to which the individual belongs. For instance, Alice, who contributed all her saving to a family emergency at the age 12, recalled, "I felt I was very significant, very useful, useful for my family. The sense of contribution felt really good." May, who struggled to pursue higher education, told her experience of working as a child laborer: "I worked in order to give my family a better living....I gave all my wages to my family." For some, the group they claim goes beyond the scope of nuclear family; Chi-wei, who shared his relocation experiences, felt losing his sense of belonging after being uprooted from his old community: "I felt I had nothing to depend on. I used to depend on my extended family and identify with the community."

Another dimension of maintaining harmony is "emphasizing face" because face is perceived as a collective issue. When Alice's sister-in-law insisted on moving out of their extended family, Alice understood perfectly how her mother felt: "This is a face-losing issue for my mom because our neighbors would say, someone's daughter-in-law took her son away not long after they got married." Ting-yi, who has been traumatized by his academic failure, said, "face is still such an important issue for people even in our generation. Chinese are deeply concerned about face. Perhaps it is a burden or constraints enforced by our tradition."

Valuing Education and Degrees has been a long standing tradition since ancient time while the significance of education nowadays is reinforced by the social mobility and financial security obtained as a result of degrees and academic achievement. Academic achievement is viewed by many as equivalent to future career success, the gaining of family face, and self-dignity. Ting-yi described how this value was instilled in his mind at a very early age by his father when he brought home a certificate of academic excellence. Not only hanging his certificate on the wall, his father wrote in calligraphy next to his certificate: "Study is the noblest of human pursuits." Therefore, it is no surprise that the experience of failing school as accompanied by a sense of shame, guilt, or loss of face. Chi-wei remembered his schooling experience: "They evaluate students based merely on academic achievement." Sharon also agreed, "since elementary school, students who have better grades have more privileges."

Putting men above women is a product of the patriarchal Chinese society in which women are usually viewed by their blood family as outsiders, who will eventually marry out to someone's family. Thus, most family resources are preserved for male descendants only. May recalled her ambition to pursue higher education was seriously questioned by her mother and joked about in the neighborhood, because the whole community felt that "after girls graduate from schools, they would be married to someone's family. So what's the use of spending money providing education for girls?" Anny, who observed the sexist attitude in a workshop in which she participated, remembered that her sister was taken out of school by her grandfather, who said, "why did she need to study? She needed to be married." Chen also remembered a similar incident of reserving resources for men in the family: "My mom would rather spend the tuition on boys....my elder brother went to a kindergarten but I never did." These cultural values usually intersect with each other to shape the meaning of the participants' life experiences.

Finding II: the process of interpretation. The meaning-making process, which contains three phases- - **the trigger event**, **the immediate reaction**, and **the negotiation**--intersected with both individual **biography** and **context. Context** in this study refers to the interpersonal and social setting where the life event occurred, was experienced, and interpreted. **Biography** generally refers to the accumulation of individual life experiences, especially the unforgettable experiences of socialization. Each participant, situated at multiple contexts, proceeded through the meaning-making process, not necessarily in a linear order, to make meaning as well as the decision and/or action.

This process of interpretation is always precipitated by a **trigger event**, which is followed by **immediate reaction**. Immediate reaction refers to an optional phase of the meaning-making process during which a trigger is given immediate meaning when an individual first encounters it. This immediate reaction may or may not be congruent with the prevailing cultural values and the participants may change their initial meaning afterwards. For instance, Su-hui's first reaction after graduating from college was to "swear that [she] would never study again because the education system in Taiwan did not allow people to develop their chosen interests." However, her initial meaning shifted after serious reconsideration of returning to graduate school. Alice, when learning of her younger brother's plan to move out the extended family, immediately wondered: "Why did they want to move out for?" Based on her socialization in a authority- and harmony-oriented environment, she thought the young couple should have followed the virtue of filial piety in order to keep his parents company.

Some participants immediately made initial meaning of the trigger event as they first experienced it while others moved to the process of negotiation, constantly trying to make some sense out of their confusion. The lack of immediate reaction was shared by participants who felt overwhelmingly confused when first encountering the trigger event. For example, Frank, whose life event is a break-up of a relationship, experienced a period of struggling or confusion before he was able to clearly articulate the meaning of the event. The length of the confusion period varied, depending on how many people were involved, how different their perspectives were, and how much the event meant to those involved.

In the phase of **negotiation**, the participants, their parents, relatives, friends, and anyone else involved in the event were all engaged in the process of negotiating and constructing meaning. Negotiation also illustrates varying degrees of cultural impact: some were highly affected by cultural values; some demonstrated mixed influences from both individual inclinations and cultural orientations while others appeared to lack any cultural inspiration. Experiences shared by May revealed the strongest influence of cultural values, including both compliance and resistance. May's desire to pursue a higher degree was directly negotiated with her parents but indirectly with her community. While the orientation toward narrowly defined gender roles firmly influenced her mother's reaction; fortunately, her father, inspired by the cultural orientation toward valuing study, approved her motivation. In this case, the orientation toward narrowly defined gender roles was compromised in prioritizing the orientation toward degree and study. Chen, when considering to give up her Ph. D. degree, the prevailing cultural orientations toward harmony, authority, filial piety, valuing face and study overwhelmingly permeated the negotiation phase. After in-depth reflection with herself and her husband, she finally realized that "I used to ignore my own feeling but only to seek the approval and rewards from my family." Around the end of the negotiation, her personal voice started to emerge and the overwhelming power of internalized cultural values appeared to be less prominent and much more easily compromised. Bulldog, whose shared experience is on-line learning, has mainly interpreted his experiences by himself. It was not affected by anyone else, nor inspired by prevailing cultural values. The negotiation phase demonstrated the complexity of meaning making and reflected various degrees of cultural influences.

The result of the negotiation, the constructed meaning, was subject to change(s) depending on subsequently encountered event(s). The originally constructed meaning might remain fixed or evolve to allow other layers of meaning to emerge. Subsequent events often stimulated participants to visit and revisit their previous life experiences, which made the process of meaning-making an endless cycle. May, for example, after the negotiation phase with herself and others, took action as guided by her constructed meaning in response to the encountered event. When looking back on this critical decision to pursue a higher degree, May said that her determination was justified by her frequent visits to old friends: "I felt that if I had not studied more, I would have lived exactly like them." Another layer of meaning, believing in fate, emerged from her originally constructed meaning years after the event.

Findings III: the role of cultural values in shaping the interpretation process Cultural values shaped the process of interpretation in various ways. First, each component of the process, ranging from the context, biography of the participants, the implications of the event, and people involved in the negotiation phase, were all culturally constructed. Second, the participants' entire journey through the process of interpretation, meaning negotiation and construction in particular, was affected by culture to varying degrees: (1) highly-affected, meaning which was either heavily congruent with or strongly resistant to the cultural orientations; (2) medium-affected, culturally constructed meaning mixed with individual inclinations; and (3) not affected, the construction of meaning with little relevant cultural input, which are independent of biography and context. The direct quotes by the participants in finding II illustrate various degrees of cultural influences in shaping the process. Thirdly, the degree of impact cultural values had on the process of meaning-making was mainly determined by the participants' biography and context. Therefore, even though these participants came from the same socio-cultural background, the meaning they made out of significant life experiences reflected varying degrees of impact from cultural values.

Conclusions and Implications

Two conclusions can be drawn from the findings of this study. The first conclusion is that the entire process of meaning-making, including one's biography and context, is culturally constructed. However, the degrees to which meaning-making is impacted by cultural values is mainly determined by biography and context. Biography and context explained how, when, and where cultural values and messages were taught to individuals. According to cognitive anthropologists, vague cultural messages, different organizations of similar culturally internalized perspectives, different conditions under which internalization has occurred, and different levels of internalization all can contribute to various perceptions, interpretation, and reactions to the same life events (Strauss, 1992). It is through a complex internalized mechanism that one's perspectives are constructed, experiences interpreted, and action taken. That is why internalized cultural values can shape or constrain behaviors, but they cannot directly generate actions. This is also why people sharing common cultural values may internalize and cognitively process these values differently, hence making different sense out of the same event.

A second conclusion that can be drawn from this study is that there is a commonly shared process individuals use to interpret their experiences. This process usually involves interrelated components: trigger events, immediate reactions, meaning-negotiation, and constructed meaning with decisions/or action, all of which intersect with the biography and context of each participant. Upon encountering subsequent events, individuals may be motivated to revisit previous experiences, reevaluate their meaning, or re-interpret it. In this sense, meaning-making is an endless cycle.

Overall, this study provides a broadened base for the development of meaning-making theory. It stresses the significance of culture in meaning-making and documents how cultural values function to affect the process of interpretation. Falling in the same line with the argument made by previous researchers, this study serves to challenge the prevailing psychological bias embedded in the theory of adult learning and development, highlighting the role of cultural values in structuring and shaping the entire interpretation process. This study strongly contends that the process of meaning-making, in addition to being socially constructed or contextually shaped, is also culturally constructed. If a picture of meaning-making is to be completely grasped, the influences of cultural values need to be taken into serious consideration.

References will be distributed at the Conference

The Journey Continues: Life Transitions and Adult Learning Among the Older Women in a Continuing Care Retirement Community

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Abstract. This study explores older women's experiences of moving and living in a continuing care retirement community. The focus is on adult learning involved in the process of adaptation. The findings suggest that transformative learning theory and continuity theory partially explain the process of successful adaptation.

Purpose of Study

A housing change signifies a drastic change in many dimensions of older adults' lives, and the relocation from one's home may involve considerable disruption especially among the elderly who have been accustomed to a house for many years. Nevertheless, change and disruption also provide opportunities for learning and development. The purpose of this study was to investigate whether adult learning was involved in the adaptation process among elderly women who recently moved to a continuing care retirement community (CCRC). Learning in this study did not only include strategies and skills used by the female residents but also the meaning they created for their new residential experiences.

Theoretical Frameworks

Past studies on retirement living focused on the social aspects of residential life after housing changes had been made. Little is known about the effect of residents' past life experiences on the process of adapting to a new living environment. Information about past experiences can provide insights into the residents' present patterns of adaptation and the meaning they create for their new residential experiences. The aspects of adult learning and development experienced by the residents after moving into a retirement home were also left unexplored in previous research. To investigate the life-long process of change and development in older adults, the life-course approach was used in this study for collecting information (Silverman, 1987).

Two theoretical frameworks were used as the point of departure for understanding the residential experiences of elderly women living in a CCRC. Continuity theory, a social theory on aging, explains how an individual adapts to changes in physical, biological, and social situations (Achley, 1988). Studies in gerontology indicate that the desire to establish a sense of continuity becomes stronger as one ages (Hazan, 1994). Continuity theory may offer explanations about the impact of past life experiences in elderly women's residential experiences.

Mezirow's theory of perspective transformation (Mezirow, 1991) provides understanding about how adult learning and development are parts of the process experienced by the female residents of CCRC in their adaptation processes. Starting with a disorienting dilemma and moving to the final phase of a transformed perspective about one's life, the process of transformative learning may explain how an elderly woman makes meaning of her new residential experience and assimilates the new meaning into a more integrated world view. How an adult develops an inclusive perspective about his or her life is an indication of adult development.

Research Design

A purposive sample was selected for this research. Five female participants were recruited through a sign-up sheet posted at Northwood, a CCRC in a Midwest college town. The participants were identified as white and middle-class women who have lived in Northwood less than one and a half years. Life history narratives were used to understand how participants constructed their lives with the emphasis on how they dealt with and attributed meaning to critical life events throughout their life course. This type of information enabled me to understand the pattern of dealing with life changes developed by each participant, which was essential to gain insights into their residential experiences.

Data were collected through unstructured, person to person interviews, accompanied by an interview guide (Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1996). Each participant was interviewed five to six times, each time for approximately 40-90 minutes. All interviews were taped for analysis. Interview transcripts were returned to participants for clarifying comments. The constant comparative method was employed for data analysis (Patton, 1990). The steps included reading all transcripts for general meaning, coding, categorizing the codes, contrasting and comparing the categories for emergent themes, reviewing the data and sharing the data with the participants.

Findings

The analysis of data reveals five emergent themes--the contexts of participants' decisions, why Northwood, difficulties experienced during the transition period, factors contributing to successful adaptation, and the journey continues.

The contexts of participants' decisions

The participants' past life experiences, personal goals, and anticipations for their future life created a context for participants to make their decisions of moving to Northwood. The impact of the participants' past life experiences was evident. The salient example shared by the participants was the experience of being caregivers for their parents or relatives. Most participants perceived the experiences as traumatic or difficult. The experiences had a profound impact on the participants' decisions of moving to a CCRC. Moving to a retirement living center avoided the participants becoming a burden for their adult children or relatives and maintained their goals of being independent as well. The anticipation of future health decline created a need for security, which contributed to the participants' decision of moving.

While the early critical life experiences created the context for the participants to plan for future moving, more recent stressful life events created another context in which the participants made the actual move. None of the participants in this study planned to move into Northwood at the time they registered for a vacancy. Instead, most of the participants waited until they encountered more recent stressful life events that propelled them to make the final decision of moving. The events included increasing frailty, inability to take care of their property and the loss of love ones.

The implication of these two contexts is similar to what Taylor (1994) described as the context of readiness. The participants were mentally ready as they moved into Northwood. The more ready the participants were in terms of moving to Northwood, the greater sense of satisfaction they would obtain after they moved.

Why Northwood

The reasons the participants chose Northwood over other CCRCs can be grouped into three main categories--family reasons, locale factors, and past residential experiences. All the participants have close relationships with their family members. They chose Northwood because they wanted to be with their family who either live in Northwood or in neighboring areas. Some participants are long-time residents in the college town where Northwood is located. Unwilling to interrupt their established support network and social activities, the participants chose Northwood in order to maintain a sense of familiarity. The third category, past residential experiences, reflects that the participants sought a new living environment that was congruent with their past residential experiences. The unique architecture of Northwood divides a three-story building into six atria. Each atrium consists of six apartments. The atrium system promotes interactions between residents and creates a homey atmosphere. The structure of Northwood, which yields a generous outdoor space, makes it stand out from other high-rise and motel-like CCRCs. These attributes are appealing to most of the residents who came from small towns or were accustomed to spacious living space.

The reasons that the participants chose Northwood seem to explain the participants' desire to maintain external continuity (Atchley, 1988) by establishing a coherence of their support networks, social activities, and residential environment. This sense of continuity is critical because it results in a sense of satisfaction and well-being (Wheeler, 1996).

Difficulties experienced during the transitional period

The transitional period is defined as the time after the participants decided to move and before they settled down in Northwood. This period can be further divided into three stages--the preparing stage, the moving-in stage, and the settling-in stage. Each stage presented various challenges to the participants. The most common difficulty in the preparing stage is the lack of time and physical energy to get ready for moving. This was especially hard for the unmarried participants who generally had less help from family members. Another common challenge was the decision concerning possessions. Deciding what to bring to Northwood in order to fit into the limited space can be a stressful task for those who established sentimental attachments to their possessions. Giving the valuable and meaningful items to family members solved the dilemma. The tasks faced by the participants in the moving-in stage were similar to those in the preparing stage. The participants were physically challenged to organize their apartments. This stage usually lasted from several weeks to a month.

While the difficulties experienced in the first two stages were likely to be solved after the participants moved in, the challenges in the settling stage took a longer time to manage. By now, the reality of living in a new place set in and the participants found themselves faced with several problems--limited storage space, no attached garage, a fixed laundry schedule, and pressure to dress more formally. Most of the participants gradually adapted to the new way of living, while some still felt unsettled.

Overall, the participants did not perceive the difficulties they encountered as detrimental to their satisfaction and well-being. They moved into Northwood because of their needs for security and social support. As these needs were fulfilled, the other obstacles seem to be insignificant. In addition, the participants gradually became accustomed to the structure of life in Northwood and began to enjoy the benefits of it. These enjoyable experiences generally override the obstacles they were facing.

Factors contributing to successful adaptation

In general, life in Northwood was perceived as satisfying by the participants. They all seemed to adapt to the new life in Northwood quickly and successfully. The most cited enjoyable experience of living in Northwood is the sense of security provided by Northwood. Knowing they would be taken care of for the rest of their lives surpasses the challenges and difficulties resulting from changes. The variety of activities and the homey atmosphere created by the residents make the new life at Northwood a pleasant experience. Based on the participants' accounts, the factors contributing to successful adaptation are as follows:

Sense of readiness. As stated previously, the contexts in which the participants made their decisions to move created a sense of readiness. The participants were ready for changes as they moved into Northwood. This anticipation of change and the determination to face the life transition facilitated successful adaptation.

Support from family members. Living close to family members was one of the major reasons the participants chose Northwood. The support from the family members is important as it provides a source of comfort and stability for the participants in the time of transition. The support can be categorized as social, physical and psychological support.

Maintaining continuity. The desire to maintain some kind of continuity in life is evident among the participants. They chose Northwood to continue the close ties with their family, to maintain their social networks, and to match their residential preferences. After they moved into Northwood, they continued most of the activities and hobbies they were familiar with even though the environment had changed. Yet maintaining continuity does not mean engaging in the exact same activities. The participants in this study were able to revise the mode of their activities by adding flexibility to fit their new circumstances better.

Learning to adapt. Learning was evident in the process of adaptation. Instrumental learning (Mezirow, 1995) and behavioral learning (Taylor, 1994) were employed by the participants in this study. Instrumental learning included reading the publication of Northwood to understand the rules and regulations. This type of learning was critical in the early stage of transition as the participants were still in the phase of familiarizing themselves with the new environment.

Behavioral learning included the acts of serving on committees, volunteering, participating in social activities, developing new hobbies, making new friends with other residents, and conforming to the cultures and customs of Northwood. Each participant in the study employed at least two modes of behavioral learning. Generally this type of learning is the most effective and satisfying approach to successful adaptation as the participants enjoyed the social and recreational aspects of the learning.

The journey continues

All participants viewed Northwood as the last stage of their lives. Yet they did not come with the attitude of waiting for their final destiny passively. Instead, they moved into Northwood in order to enjoy their lives without the worry of burdening their family members and taking care of property. The degree to which they were actively engaged after moving into Northwood varied according to personal goals and health status. While some participants desired to remain active and productive, some hoped they could just maintain their current health status and the activities they enjoy.

No perspective transformation is evident among the participants in the study. All participants perceived no significant change in their lives and themselves after they moved into

Northwood. They believe their attitudes toward themselves, their lives, and deaths remain the same.

Conclusions and Discussions

Three general conclusions were drawn from the findings. First, the findings suggest that residential change is not a source of disruption and stress in life as indicated in past studies. Instead, moving into a CCRC provides a solution for previously existing dilemmas the participants encountered. The environmental change signifies another stage of life that the participants in this study were ready to embrace.

Second, the study demonstrates that elderly people are dynamic individuals who constantly evaluate their changing needs. In this study, the participants were proactive in responding to their increasing needs for security, social support, and environmental consistency. They planned ahead and initiated the residential change that increased their personal control and life satisfaction (Kahana & Kahana, 1996). They also actively employed various types of learning to facilitate their adaptations. The result of their proactive adaptation in late life is the successful maintenance of continuity and a sense of well-being.

Third, both continuity theory and transformative learning theory explain the participants' experiences of relocation and adaptation partially. Continuity theory recognizes the importance of past experiences on the decision to change one's residence. These prior experiences created a context in which the participants made their decisions in order to maintain external and internal continuity (Atchly, 1988). Transformative learning theory seems to overlook the critical role of early life experiences in participants' decision-making and adaptation process. The participants were mentally ready for residential change and life transition, which in turn contributed to their successful adaptation.

Both theories recognize the proactive aspect of human adaptation. Continuity cannot be achieved if individuals fail to actively pursue it as they go through daily existence and interpret the circumstances with which they deal (Myerhoff, 1979). While continuity theory seem to identify the proactive aspect of adaptation, tranformative learning theory focuses more on the learning aspect of adaptation. The theory provides an insight into the process of how participants learn to adapt to a new living environment.

Implications

The findings of the study indicate that continuity theory and transformative learning theory are both valid yet insufficient to explain the participants' experience of moving and adaptation. The study provides insights into both theories. It is evident from the findings that the development of a new model integrating multiple theories across disciplines is needed for gaining insights into older women's aging experiences.

Knowing how elderly residents adapt to a new living environment will guide decisions about the kinds of assistance and programming helpful to the new residents in the process of adaptation. The study identifies three phases during which the participants encountered most of their difficulties. Although the administration of CCRCs cannot help the residents select their possessions or sell their property, they can help the residents settle in more easily. For example, the existing welcome committee can extend their function. The members of the committee can serve as correspondents or informants for new residents. They can provide insiders' tips and strategies for newcomers to make the transition less stressful.

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Constructing "Composite Dialogs" from Qualitative Data: Towards Representing and Managing Diverse Perspectives

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Abstract: During empirical research on adult learning, I developed a technical method of constructing dialogs from many interviews as an approach to qualitative data. Composite Dialogs present diverse perspectives while preserving elements of context and affect often lost through other methods. The approach should be of particular interest to adult educators who desire to link research to social action for democratic change.

Fieldwork, Data, and Misperceptions. I returned from nearly a year of intensive fieldwork in the Philippines with complete transcripts of 53 individual and focus group interviews and a file drawer full of documents. I had gone to the Philippines to facilitate action research, studying the learning processes involved when people significantly change their approaches to development work. I examined processes of transformation from centralized "blueprint" approaches, to more participatory, community-based development efforts in the context of extensive government decentralization. I returned confident that the efforts had been of some benefit to my partners. However, the daunting task of analyzing, interpreting and presenting over five hundred pages of data in a way that was meaningful and useful, both to "the field" and to practitioners in the field, nearly paralyzed me. In prior research, I had built category systems for qualitative data, but this approach did not seem appropriate now. How could I reduce my material to a series of disembodied sound bites? Not this time. I was groping for a way to respect the richness of the source material, yet present findings in a manageable form.

I recognized that, to some extent, my research questions were misperceptions I brought to the field. However, as I continued to immerse myself in the data both in the field and at home, new understandings emerged, replacing old hypotheses with better questions. My data did not answer these questions conclusively but provided a range of answers and discussion around these questions. This paper outlines an approach I developed to address my concerns. The approach is concurrently analytic, interpretive and representational.

A Theory-Method Gap in Adult Education Research. Adult education research benefits from a variety of qualitative methods borrowed from other fields (Merriam, 1989, 1998). However, prevalent qualitative research methods sometimes reduce the complexity of experiences, ignore affective dimensions altogether, or decontextualize results in a way that sacrifices meaning. Taylor's critical review of research on transformative learning (1997) elucidates some of these weaknesses calling for different approaches to research. In the traditions of critical theory, action research, and feminist epistemology, some methods clash with the values of popular participation or fair representation of multiple perspectives (Hall 1996; Joyappa & Martin, 1996; Cocklin, 1996). While examining adult learning, I developed a technical method of constructing dialogs as an approach to qualitative data. This was not driven by a desire to use a novel form of representation. I constructed dialogs because I was dissatisfied with other methods of qualitative analysis. This approach generates knowledge by revealing and highlighting the differences in people's perspectives in a way that begs action.

In my own research on adult learning, dialogs help (1) manage the diversity of participant's experiences; (2) reveal the complex nature of adult learning; and (3) suggest the possibility of organizing to support learning and change. From the dialogs, I drew out four different arenas for taking action, including opportunities for: (1) creating spaces for learning and change; (2) examining assumptions about the local capacity for change; (3) learning through participatory action; and (4) democratizing bureaucratic organizations.

Perspective. Throughout my research, tension remains between building theory and informing practice. The framework of Participatory Action Research helps me to preserve that tension (Greenwood & Levin, 1998; Fals Borda & Rahman, 1991). Guba & Lincoln's (1989) *trustworthiness* criteria provide a vocabulary to discuss the quality and credibility of the dialogs. The dialogs should catalyze reflection and guide readers toward action. To the extent they are effective in doing so, they demonstrate their *authenticity*.

Observations on Constructing Dialogs. The dialogs began as an analytic approach to deal with a vast amount of interview data. Much qualitative work could be better understood at this level of analysis, perhaps more so than through descriptive categories or third-person ethnographies. The dialogs keep the reader close to the data while preserving some of the complexity and affect of the original material. Constructed dialogs, though not without limitations, have some distinct advantages. They can: (1) present "silenced" voices, (2) bring perspectives from participants who are unable to come together either because of physical or ideological distance, (3) and avoid the distortions of negative group dynamics in a live discussion.

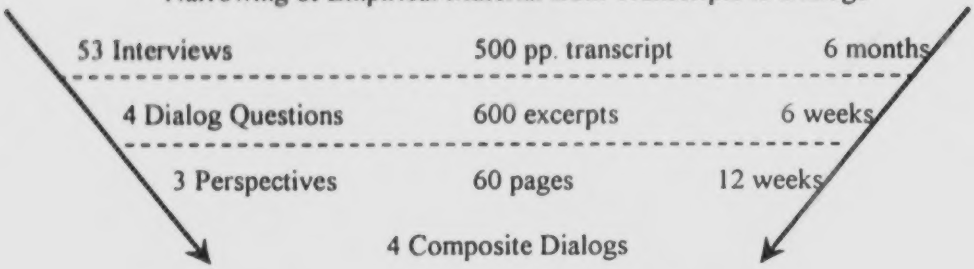
Researchers are quick to ask practical questions, such as: How long did this take? Figure 1 presents a funnel illustrating the time it took me to both develop the approach and apply it to my data. Over time, I became more facile with the technique. The first dialog took me over a month to construct, with many false starts, while the fourth dialog took just over a week. Furthermore, I constructed dialogs retrospectively. If one planned to use the approach, it would likely move more quickly. Figure 1 also shows how the dialogs economize on the original source material. In my case, I used roughly 12% of the original material in the dialogs.

Sample Section of Dialog. Box 1 is a section of dialog (approximately one tenth of the entire dialog) that explores the process of change in the way people view and approach development work and their role in it. I tried to understand people's concepts and ideas about development work and what difference they make to their own practice. I also tried to understand the process, *how* these changes came about. This particular dialog sheds light on the process of *transformative learning*.

In this section of dialog (Box 1), Pia, Jaime and Joel share the "how" of their changes in thinking with personal stories. They talk about experiences rooted in different contexts (family, hometown, school, job, etc.) over a period of almost thirty years. They move from simply sharing experiences to reflecting about them aloud. Profound changes did occur. Participants in the complete dialog demonstrate varying degrees of critical reflection, examining and questioning their assumptions and past learning about development. They share direct experience in taking action, particularly when that action confronted power structures that were, in their opinion, barriers to development or democracy. Similarly, direct experience working with the poor has changed the way people view themselves. Many illustrations are personal and often emotionally charged. Transformation is also put forth as a social process worked out through sharing these powerful experiences and processing them through discussions with others, be they colleagues or teachers or family members. The dialog presents a range of different views, from development as empowerment to development as the creation of infrastructure or the delivery of services.

Figure 1

Narrowing of Empirical Material from Transcripts to Dialogs



Box 1

Section of a Dialog: How has your view and practice of development work changed?

Pete: How did you come to think this way about development? . . What experiences triggered your changes in thinking?

Pia: We came from a not so well-to-do family. You cannot give me inputs about poverty because I've been there, I've been there. I was just one of the lucky guys who went to College and volunteered myself in some institution. With new inputs, new development concepts that were introduced to me, just supported my sentiments about this participatory process. It made the foundation stronger. (staff)

Jaime: It's more of the way I was brought up with my parents to be involved in community activities. This being involved in community activities was augmented when I was trained for six months with Philippine Business for Social Progress in community organizing. (NGO)

Joel: Actually I started with exposure to the people in our barrio or Carmen—normally we go there for weekend. And I noticed, many of the farmers have really not making or tilling their land properly or taking there animals and complaining the fertilizer cost, but then they would not also gather the manure in making compost. So that's how I started I there trying to be an agriculturist . . . (NGO)

Pete: Is there anything . . . . that you look back on and say "this has had a profound impact on the way I think about development?"

Pia: Yes, that time 1986, when I first started—first year of college then—the time of Cory [Aquino] in 1986. So that's really where this thing about development, this people empowerment, this people power, that popular time. And corruptions in government was that rampant. Well, actually that is also one thing, I said then to myself, that after I finish college I won't ever go with these people in the government—I'd rather look for a kind that's really for people, that's for the development of the people. (NGO)

Jaime: . . . being involved with environmental groups and seminars. Before, in Divine Word, we used to have a group we called the Friends of Tarsus [a rare monkey found in forests of Bohol], and that was one time which really changed my views about development—my involvement in that group really changed my views about development. . . . . And it was composed of different people from different sectors and we had a lot of plans—we even had something like an ecological rally and a clean up drive and then a massive information campaign—we went to the radio stations and shared a lot about what was going on with our environment. I did not care so much about it before that time, but during that time I was some sort of—really doing my homework, and reading so much about what is going on. (NGO)

Joel: I had been commuting to major cities . . . and meeting people in the urban centers—I envied people some. . . . . but talking to them they envied me. My lifestyle is I could wake up at 7:00 and be at my office at 8:00, and walk and relax and enjoy. It creates a certain reawakening in me and says, "hey, what really is development?, what really is success?, what really is the purpose of all these things? We might be in a mad scramble for development but it leads to nowhere—it leads to a self-destruct mechanism. (NGO)

Did the dialogs actually occur? No (and yes). They are a construction or representation of many different interviews, thus the term "composite." The excerpts in the dialogs are the actual words, verbatim; I have edited the dialogs only for length and clarity. It may be useful to envision the dialogs in terms of a "reader's theater" where actors speak into the center of the room rather than having a conversation that goes back and forth directly between individual participants.

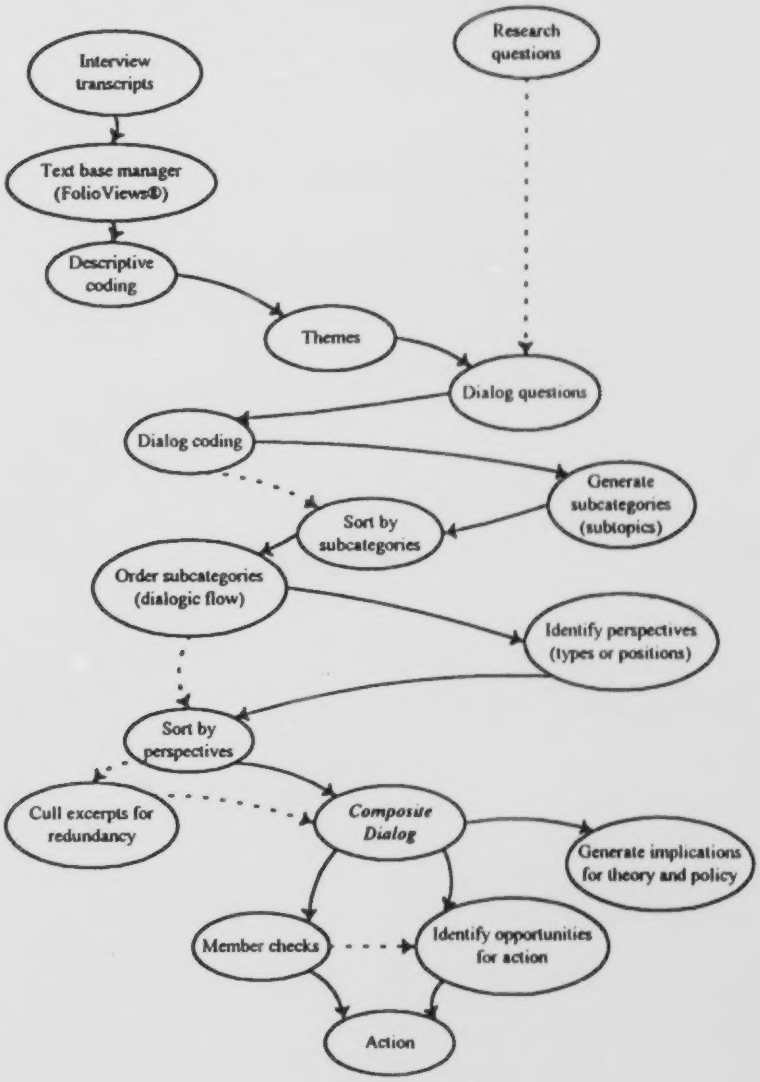
Strength of Approach. Constructing dialogs provided new insight into the learning processes that I was studying. The different participants share many ideas and illustrate them with their personal experiences. The dialogs provide a new way or platform for these perspectives to interact. This made the analytic process more complex, dimensional, and political. The dialog approach makes it difficult to avoid issues of power and authority as they appear in the data.

Theories, while usually good at describing the present situation or the ideal, often leave the practical problem of how to get there or "what do we do next?" unanswered (Toulmin, 1996). In contrast to theories, the dialogs express concrete alternatives for taking action. The 'how' problem becomes not only discussible, but the participants recognize what is standing in the way of change and start to remove the barriers.

Implications. The dialogs seek to preserve the diversity of the conversation (Flood & Romm, 1997). Each perspective carries only a piece of the conclusion. Some analytic approaches reduce material to a diluted consensus or majority voice, presenting an oversimplified picture that gives researchers a false sense of security in a narrow set of conclusions--complexity is much more unsettling, but a far more accurate and useful representation. Dialogs present no forced consensus; they are comfortable in doing so. By creating the space to share perspectives and approaches, they create an informed consensus of *action* rather than a false consensus of *ideas*. This does not dismiss the need for the discussion of ideas–far from it. It allows participants the freedom to discuss their ideas while lessening the fears of a paralyzing ideological stalemate that would stifle any action.

Composite Dialogs Step-By-Step. In Figure 2 below, I outline the steps I used to construct dialogs from semi-structured interviews. (1) Interview data were imported from word processing files into FolioViews® software as a textual database. (2) I coded the data descriptively based on my original research questions. (3) From this coding, several topics emerged as broad themes. I then turned these topics into dialog questions. For example, I turned the topic "political economy of transformation" into the question, "What is preventing you from putting your view into practice?" (4) Using the software's search engine, I identified excerpts and coded them according to the appropriate dialog question. These excerpts became the raw material for each dialog. (5) At this point, the excerpts for a particular dialog question were re-read and sorted for similarity. The results formed the subtopics for a given dialog, i.e. "political constraints," "lack of shared understanding," etc. This took several iterations. (6) I then labeled each subtopic (group of excerpts) and used a flow-diagram program to map out the rhythm and sequence of the particular dialog. (7) From the organized excerpts, I looked for the different ways people approached the question, and then constructed three different dialogic positions. (8) I laid out the dialog by further sorting the excerpts into these different positions. (9) At this point, I removed some excerpts because they were redundant, no longer fit the dialog, or were less significant. I tried to treat each position fairly, essentially applying "ideal conditions for discourse" to the dialogs I was constructing by avoiding a dominant position. Constructing dialogs was both a demanding analytic process and an intensely creative one. Arranging and rearranging text was necessary to achieve a dialog

Figure 2
Overview of the Process of Constructing *Composite Dialogs*


Interview transcripts
Research questions
Text base manager (FolioViews®)
Descriptive coding
Themes
Dialog questions
Dialog coding
Generate subcategories (subtopics)
Sort by subcategories
Order subcategories (dialogic flow)
Identify perspectives (types or positions)
Sort by perspectives
Cull excerpts for redundancy
Composite Dialog
Generate implications for theory and policy
Member checks
Identify opportunities for action
Action

that allowed the reader to follow the flow of the discussion. With each subsequent dialog, the method became more natural.

The diagram in Figure 2 is deceptive in that it makes the process appear linear. In reality, there was significant iteration through hypotheses, methods, conclusions, and action. The interplay between these elements was intense as I tacked back and forth between each, generating new conclusions that superceded prior conceptions. As one goes down the diagram, the analysis gets more sophisticated yet remains grounded in the empirical data.

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The existence of a piecemeal world of works-in-progress is messy and difficult. Dialogs provide a strategy to manage it. In my research, action implications did not emerge from a single perspective but flow from the dialog among the perspectives. The dialogs preserve the complexity of the source material while presenting the diversity of results in an accessible form. Alternative perspectives are not dismissed or prevented from entering the discourse.

Future research efforts in adult education could benefit from constructing, interpreting, and acting on dialogs collaboratively with participants. With adaptation, the dialogs lend themselves to performance in the spirit of popular theater (Bates, 1996), or could serve as a basis for quantitative surveys. Composite Dialogs are but one strategy to construct narratives that are more authentic.

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Information-Seeking Activity of Rural Health Practitioners

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Abstract: Qualitative methods were used to identify the information-seeking activity (ISA) of rural health practitioners (non-physicians). Conditions shaping ISA were time, resources, and barriers. The primary strategy used was connecting with resources, particularly people. ISA led to consequences of problem resolution, greater competence, or more questions.

Objectives

This study identified how context influenced the information seeking activity of allied health practitioners as well as the strategies and resources commonly used in practice. How rural allied-health professionals acquired, filtered, and created information they needed in practice was examined from the perspective of information *seekers* rather than *providers*.

Summary of Problem

Discovering how rural practitioners learn and use information-seeking skills is needed to understand the competencies required of today's rural health practitioners. This need to discover information-seeking behaviors used in practice is even more crucial today because of 1) increased patient expectations and 2) an explosion of health-related information. Historically, patients seldom questioned a practitioner's decisions. "Today's consumers are demanding more--and more detailed--health information and are taking a more active role in making medical and lifestyle decisions" (Resources for Rehabilitation, 1998, p. 9). Rural practitioners today seldom have enough time to access and critically appraise all the information that is available and often do not have the technological tools or skills needed to access and manage information effectively. In an information-driven system, health professionals must be skilled in finding patient, scientific and technological information efficiently. Competencies needed by health practitioners were identified by the Pew Health Professions Commission (1995) as the ability to (a) use technology appropriately, (b) manage information, and (c) continue to learn. As the importance of information-technology grows, rural practitioners may have special challenges and opportunities in gaining competency in information seeking. Findings from this study can be used by both educators and practitioners to prepare students for rural practice and to strengthen the information-seeking skills of rural practitioners through continuing learning opportunities.

Theoretical Framework

Information-seeking activity was viewed as *situated learning* where context was an important part of the learning event, not peripheral to it (Rogoff, 1984). Practitioners used the knowledge, people and tools in their settings in seeking information. The activity was distributed over time, space, and people, not just an individual's thought process. This perspective placed importance on the *distributive* nature of learning and on the tools involved (Star, 1996). It drew together *what* was learned in practice with *how* and *where* it was learned and used.

Method

A grounded theory approach was used to discover the conditions, strategies, and consequences of information-seeking activity (Strauss & Corbin; 1990). One researcher spent a year working in two rural nursing homes as a practitioner and participant-observer. This allowed close examination of the events, questions, settings, tools and activities of information seeking among 16 practitioners who were physical, occupational, or respiratory therapists, radiological technologists, and speech and language pathologists.

Units of analysis included individuals as well as clusters of professionals working in the same nursing homes. Three data collection strategies were used: (1) participant-observation, (2) document collection, and (3) in-depth interviews including use of the critical incident technique (Flanagan, 1954). Observations and sixteen in-depth interviews were the primary data sources. Secondary sources, used to expand the scope and insure trustworthiness, included printed documents: manuals, newsletters, surveys and postings found in the work setting. The triangulation of data gave a variety of perspectives on the activity.

An inductive method was used to develop themes and codes around the primary research question of how rural health practitioners seek information (Boyatzis, 1998). Two questions emerged from the data: (1) what strategies, resources and tools do rural practitioners use and (2) how does the context of practice influence their information-seeking. Subject checks, and sorting by an outside coder were done to increase the trustworthiness of the interpretation.

Findings

"Making connections" emerged as a core information-seeking strategy. This strategy included making connections with internal resources of their own knowledge, skill, and ability to observe, remember, reflect, and frame questions. It also included making external connections with human and non-human resources. Human resources included professional colleagues, coworkers, supervisors, directors, consultants, patients and family, equipment providers, administrators and educators. Non-human resources included the tools of telephones, fax machines, and CB radios along with printed materials that were easily accessed and read. Computers and clinical literature were not observed to be primary resources but were perceived as potentially good sources. Practitioners often drew from one another's experience or previous situations in recognizing discrepancies, posing questions, and identifying solutions. A primary strategy used by everyone was talking with others, often by phone, when talking face-to-face was not practical. Faxing, mailing and computers were used in more limited ways. Practitioners spoke of "taking the technology with you" and "knowing how to get on the telephone and knowing who to call" as important strategies.

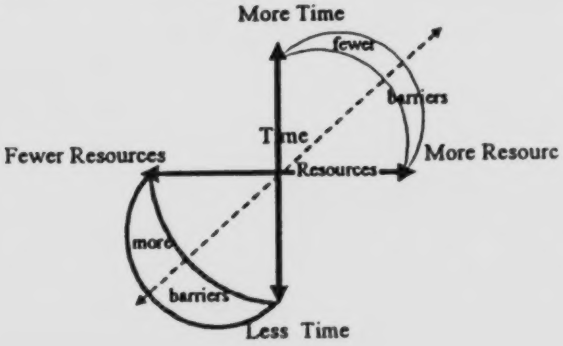
Conditions impacting information seeking included the urgency and importance of the questions, the time and resources required to answer them, and barriers encountered. Questions that were too complex, lacked importance, urgency or benefit were not pursued. Barriers to being able to access information fell into three categories: (1) internal barriers like pride, anxiety, resistance, and lack of skill or knowledge. (2) Intangible barriers like lack of time, long distances, bad weather, restrictive policies, and isolation sometimes required practitioners to rely on their own resources rather than seek outside information. (3) Tangible barriers such as lack of computers and access to e-mail and Internet, libraries and databases, equipment, money and space also restricted access. Barriers in the design of a facility, what is referred to here as the "setting space," also limited access. Practitioners expressed preferences for more computer-linked access to medical records, other people, and resources as well as more time and opportunities for continued learning and education "closer to home."

Consequences of information seeking led to resolving clinical problems, to gaining competence, and to generating further questions. Patients often benefited from practitioners successfully finding information that helped them resolve clinical problems. Successful seekers became providers of information and gained competence through using it in their practice. Sometimes seeking information resulted in not finding it or in identifying new problems that generated more questions and continued the process. These findings are summarized below:

Making Connections			
Internal connections **In *problem space*** **Recognizing the problem** **Connecting information conceptually** **Resources: inner knowledge & skills** ***What is the question?*** ***What do I know? What else do I need to know?*** ***How urgent or important is it?***		**External connections** **In *setting space*** **Recognizing the information sources** **Locating the information externally** **Resources: human and non-human** ***Where is the information that is needed?*** ***How can I access the information?***	
propositional knowledge ***knowledge base*** **ability to recognize information**	**process & know-how** ***Information-seeking skills*** **ability to find information** ***experience*:** **ability to create it**	**human resources** **co-workers, patients, families, organizations, communities**	**non-human resources** **physical space; tools: phone, fax, computer** **time and money resources,** **events: meetings, cont. ed.**

Internal connections were made in the *problem space*, where conceptual connections were made when a discrepancy or problem was recognized, a question posed, and solutions or sources identified. The strategies used involved tapping into the personal, *process knowledge* of "know-how" as well as more codified knowledge (scientific and technical) of their professions (Eraut, 1994; Schon, 1987). External connections were made in a *setting space* by connecting to people and by using tools, resources, and events needed to access information.

Information seeking was tied to having both time and resources as illustrated below:



Locals and Travelers

"Local" practitioners lived and worked in one or two locations while "travelers" dropped in and out of many practice situations and carried their tools with them. Travelers were bound by employment contracts and sought information from outside the setting, such as from corporate specialists. Travelers had less time in a setting but broader connections and resources than did locals who had more time in one setting but fewer resources. Social bonds to their communities connected locals more than travelers. Having both time and resources and using a full spectrum of resources available tended to enhance effectiveness of information seekers.

How did context influence information-seeking activity of rural practitioners?

Rural practitioners' connections to (1) the communities and (2) the building, staff and work space in which they practiced influenced their information-seeking activities. Locals with stability and longevity in a setting accumulated not only material resources but "social capital" or an investment in relationships (Coleman, 1988) both within the facility and the community. For example, an occupational therapist knew what choir parts local physicians sang. Because the physicians trusted him, he was able to get information quickly from them. He was also a meals-on-wheels deliveryman, a volunteer fireman, and a basketball coached. He was as likely to exchange information in those activities as in his office. Locals also had access to more interactions and resources within their buildings than travelers. When practitioners' work space and time overlapped with that of other practitioners, information was sought within the facility.

Traveling practitioners, on the other hand, commuted among as many as 90 different communities and were connected to a wider variety of resources, both human and non-human, than locals. They carried a limited number of resources with them and connected by phone, fax, or CB radio to central offices, corporate consultants, and fellow practitioners who were often miles away. They drew on resources at a corporate level and at a personal level removed from their work settings rather than engaging in face-to-face information seeking locally. A physical therapist, for example, would reflect on clinical questions while driving between assignments and later contacted his company's educational specialist or a classmate to access information.

Time pressure also increased the importance of the immediate setting. Practitioners tended to use human resources more because they were accessible. In "hot action" situations, rural practitioners would use resources immediately available (Eraut, 1985, p 128). In general, locals had a dense, close-knit set of resources that allowed them to make greater use of social and face-to-face community connections. Travelers, like "boundary crossers" described by Engestrom and Cole (1997), tended to make use of a geographically larger and loosely-knitted network resources. They often connected using communication technology rather than face-to-face interaction. Both locals and travelers developed support networks and connections but these differed by setting and the experience of the practitioner. Lemke, writing about networks of activities, suggests that "individual trajectories that move between these networks also knit them together, also open them up to change due to one another's influence" (1997, p. 307).

The content and location of a therapy room impacted the way information was sought. At Hollyhock, a facility staffed primarily by "locals", therapy rooms were personalized with files, books, and catalogues while Edgewater, staffed by traveling therapists, included fewer personal or informational resources. Those practitioners working near activity hubs, such as nurses' stations, were involved in more information exchanges and so had better access to certain information. Dana, an occupational therapist, went to the nurses station to ask questions and said she would "find out a lot ... by asking about one thing and they would talk about other things." A similar kind of "collateral learning," as opposed to "direct" learning, was reported among physicians by Slotnick (et.al., 1998). Travelers had fewer hallway conversations or curbside consultations with regular home employees since practitioners were not in the same place at the same time. However, they had more frequent communication with outside consultants and a greater variety of interactions in multiple settings. Travelers were "married to their beepers" and made heavy use of communication technology wherever they were located. They moved in and out of facilities and situations quickly, often engaging in fragmented work sessions. For both locals and travelers, "the ability to choose and locate relevant resources based on needs, availability and limitations of the situation" (Candy, 1991, p. 465) was a needed skill.

Conclusions

1. Information seeking activity is regulated by a work environment that dictates demands as well as resources. The work environment was a source of constraints as well as resources. The demands imposed by workload, time-pressures, the work space, the weather, conditions of traveling or mediating messages through imperfect technology all served as constraints to seeking information. Environmental stresses clearly impacted the type of information and method of information-seeking practitioners used. The phone and conversations took precedent over pursuing written information. Urgency and conservation of resources such as time and money often controlled to what length or expense a practitioner could go for information. The rural practice settings also offered resources that supported information-seeking activities. The rural work environment offered time, space, and relationships of stability and longevity for some locals and other broader connections for some travelers.

2. Rural practitioners are influenced by their environment and play an active role in modifying it as they engage in information-seeking activities. While the environment influenced practitioners, they also played an active role in modifying it as they engage in information-seeking activities. *Who* and *what* were available shaped the information-seeking activities practitioners engage in. Expertise often resided in the person who knew the most about the situation, regardless of status or job. Practitioners were extremely practical in using the people and resources in their settings. Practitioners also modified the environment through their information-seeking efforts. Practitioners needed to "take the technology with them," according to one interviewee. Travelers also drew on their experience in other places to bring fresh perspectives to bear on the information needs of a rural setting.

3. Rural practitioners can be empowered by their environments in seeking information. The important or determining factor may not be the *quantity* of resources but the *quality* of the one's that are available and the perseverance and commitment of the practitioner. The larger task may not be finding information, as much as filtering the information found. To be able to critically appraise the value and appropriateness of information used in solving a clinical problem may depend more on inner resources than external ones. Being good stewards and sharing the resources at hand can be as powerful a resource for information seeking as having the latest in computer technology on every desk. Likewise, having the "coping technology" to accompany the learning technology may be needed more than having the latest database on a computer and no skill in access it.

4. Investment in a community of practice can make it easier for rural practitioners to seek information and to serve as information resources. Those practitioners with an investment in "social capital," i.e., relationships within communities of practice, often were effective at getting the information they needed and in sharing it.

Implications and Recommendations

This study led to the following recommendations for practice, education, and research. Those in practice environments need to (1) value informal channels of seeking information as highly as more formal channels, (2) support appropriate technology use, recognizing the need for information specialists, funding, and time for startup and ongoing training and (3) provide spaces and tools that encourage the creation, sharing, and use of information. Environments are needed that enhance natural, casual interactions, that facilitate information sharing by multiple means, that resolve tensions between what is public domain and what is private domain, that encourage development of alternative routes, and that acknowledge there are many paths to securing the salient information to resolve a clinical problem.

Educators need to: (1) reconsider assumptions about the optimal skills and tools needed in practice and how to teach the skills of using "the clues at hand," valuing and using inner resources, discerning when to use one's own judgment and when it is insufficient; (2) teach strategies that have not been taught directly such as how to recognize practice settings that support one's preferences in information-seeking, how to customize tools, and how to negotiate for technical support. (3) allow students enough time in practice settings to become "legitimate" participants (Lave & Wenger, 1991).

Further researchers needs to: (1) explore the information-seeking activities of groups of practitioners in work teams among and across professions; (2) replicate this study in comparable urban nursing homes; (3) evaluate the effectiveness of information-seeking activities identified in this study and (4) explore the internal process of how practitioners frame or define problems and the consequences of those decisions.

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Explaining the Transformation of Ethical Vegans:
Is Mezirow's Theory Adequate?

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Abstract: This paper explores the adequacy of Mezirow's transformation theory to describe the transformational learning of ethical vegans. A critical reading of the participants' narratives revealed that a temporal understanding of power is needed. Transformation theory failed to account for the power of normative ideologies to undermine the emancipatory learning and praxis of ethical vegans over time.

Normative Ideologies and Transformation Theory

How do adults learn to make major changes in their lives? This question has intrigued adult education researchers for over twenty years, since Mezirow (1978a, 1978b) first introduced his ideas about transformational learning. In spite of the number of published articles and debates regarding transformational learning (Clark & Wilson, 1991; Collard & Law, 1989; Inglis, 1997; Mezirow, 1990, 1991a, 1991b, 1992, 1994, 1995, 1996; Newman, 1994; Pietrykowski, 1996; Taylor, 1993, 1997; Tennant, 1993), Mezirow's transformation theory remains the only theory of learned major lifestyle change within adult education. As Taylor (1997) noted, however, few empirical studies on Mezirow's transformation theory have been published; and in dissertations completed using Mezirow's theory, there has been little theoretical critique.

Mezirow (1991a, 1992, 1995) claimed that his theory is an abstract, generic, individualized process of adult learning that is comprised of critical reflection, rational discourse, and emancipatory praxis. Transformational, emancipatory learning is optimized within the ideal conditions of discourse, that is, communication free of distortion and manipulation. Following Habermas, Mezirow recognized that discourse is susceptible to systematic manipulation and distortion (Mezirow, 1995). Because these distortions and manipulations are inevitable, however, transformation theory assumes they can be overcome through critical reflection, discourse, and emancipatory praxis. Critics have argued that transformation theory does not practically account for the power of systematic knowledge and cultural ideologies to distort communication (Hart, 1985; Pietrykowski, 1996) and therefore constrain or inhibit adult learning.

Cultural ideologies are self-perpetuating and do so in the interests of those with power (Hart, 1985). Thus, systematic communication and action are structured through inequality and injustice. Even when power is "thematized," it remains a formidable barrier to adult learning (Hart, 1985). Critics, therefore, have argued for the importance of power in understanding such learning (Hart, 1985; Inglis, 1997; Newman, 1994; Pietrykowski, 1996). In spite of these calls, transformation theory has retained its psychological emphasis, and research has yet to empirically show how power might be practically integrated into the theory (Inglis, 1997).

The overarching purpose of this research was to determine whether Mezirow's transformation theory explains the process of learning to become an ethical vegan. The specific purposes of this analysis were to 1) explore the role of power in transformational learning, and 2) assess whether transformation theory's treatment of power is adequate to explain the transformational experience of ethical vegans. Ethical vegans are individuals who have given up the consumption and use of all animal products and by-products, including meat, dairy, eggs, wool, and leather, for ethical reasons (Vegetarians, in contrast, may consume animal by-products such as leather, eggs, and dairy products). Vegans' primary ethical objections are to the oppression of and cruelty to non-human animals associated with animal agriculture and related industries. The vegan movement, like the feminist movement, represents efforts to expose and resist systematic structures of power by "thematizing" them (Adams, 1990; Hart, 1985). In this context, power is defined by human supremacy over non-human animals, and is sustained by the normative ideology represented by speciesism. Speciesism is a systematic prejudice in favor of one's own species and against other species (Singer, 1990). Adams (1990) described how communication and interaction support speciesist values: "Behind every meat meal is an absence, the death of the animal whose place the meat takes. With the word 'meat' the truth about this death is absent. Thus, in expressing their concern about eating animals, vegetarians cannot ignore the issue of language. In this they are not unlike feminists who find that issues of language imbricate women's oppression" (1990, p. 63).

Hart (1985) argued that if "the acquisition of a practical consciousness that is capable of rationally addressing moral-practical questions is accepted as a major educational objective, consciousness raising groups and collectives can be considered genuine adult educational situations" (p. 121). Thus, the consciousness raising and collectives of vegans should also be considered adult education. For people who have grown up consuming the typical American diet, unconsciously accepting the norms of language and action that oppress animals, becoming vegan represents a major personal change. This change, in accordance with Mezirow's definition of a transformational experience, "call[s] into question deeply held personal values, and threaten[s] our very sense of self" (Mezirow, 1991a, p. 168). Mezirow (1996) noted that a transformational learning experience requires the learner to make a reflective and informed decision to act. If Mezirow's theory is valid for a variety of transformational learning experiences, it should explain how people learn to become and remain ethical vegans.

Research Design

The phenomenological framework of this study sought to understand "the structure and essence" of the experience of learning to become an ethical vegan (Patton, 1990, p. 69). The underlying tenant of phenomenology is that individuals can only know what they experience. The aim of phenomenology is to "determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it" (Moustakas, 1994, p. 13). The researcher also employed heuristic methodology (Moustakas, 1990), taking advantage of her own vegan experience. The goal was to uncover what mattered, from the vegans' perspective, as they discovered the ideology of veganism and adopted it as a "generalized norm" (Hart, 1985, p. 126) in place of their speciesist ideology. The research involved in-depth unstructured interviews with twelve ethical vegans. All these individuals were Caucasian, middle class, and had been vegan for at least one year. Purposeful sampling techniques, including intensity, snowball, and opportunistic sampling, were used. An initial sample was identified at a national animal rights march, based on the acknowledged relationship between understanding animal rights theory and veganism (Adams, 1990; Stepaniak, 1998). The data were analyzed using a holistic analysis, followed by a constant comparative analysis (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

Powerful Lifeworld Challenges Emerge in Transformational Learning

A learning process generic to these vegans emerged from the holistic analysis. This process was revealed through the first person account of experience, usually chronological, exposing such phases as initial personal identity, the repression of potentially transforming information, the catalytic event (Courtenay, Merriam, and Reeves, 1998), the decision to become vegan, consciousness raising (Hart, 1985), praxis, and the transformed ideology.

The constant comparative analysis elucidated this process as one shaped by systematic structures of power. The relative strength and influence of these structures of power emerged in participants' narratives across two dimensions, described below. The oppression of non-human animals, systematically reinforced across these dimensions through communicative and activity norms, served as the vortex for participant reflection, discourse, and a regulated praxis.

The oppression of non-human animals was introduced by written or spoken word, and by visual images. It was embraced "...through the more quiet moment of nagging doubt, courageously given into, or through the emotional turmoil of disorienting dilemmas..." (Hart, 1985, p. 122). Whether sudden or gradual, it was, however, a point of ideological clarity for the vegan-to-be. Prior to becoming vegan, every participant had been a meat eater, had assumed the normative speciesist ideology. Lisa, who had never heard of veganism nor consciously considered a vegan ideology prior to this moment, reacted to a video on animal cruelty. Her comments are representative of the way in which a discovered truth about animal cruelty was embraced:

> I watched the video. It was like they say, the curtain was pulled back. The truth was made known. It's just when I learned the real truth of the matter, and how [non-human animals] are treated, I didn't want to partake in it. I didn't want to contribute in any way to what I knew now to be the real truth out there. I know the cruelty that exists.

Just as women in the 1960's became aware of society's "maleness" (Hart, 1985), these vegans-to-be discovered society's humanness—its self-perpetuating but largely unconscious ideology that keeps the interests of non-human animals subjugated. The participants found themselves struggling against powerful institutional and personal challenges to their newly discovered ideology.

Institutional power was manifested in the pervasiveness of animal cruelty within government, industry, and education. Power was operationalized through misinformation, selective information, or lack of information (Forester, 1989). Sean's words illustrate how institutions obfuscate information and may constrain transformational learning and praxis:

> Reading the [product] labels drives me nuts. It was technically a gradual step to veganism because, although I took all of the dairy out of my fridge, I didn't know that monodiglycerides were bad for about a month....I think a lot of vegans don't realize what those big words on the backs of food are.

Participants observed that information was manipulated by research institutions, educational institutions, and in the marketplace. Maire noted how advertisements show "all these smiling cows." Roger and Cary pointed out how cows are shown grazing in green pastures, rather than in the factory farms that is their reality.

Welton (1995) noted that institutions either enable or inhibit learning, calling those that are not democratic communities of learning "miseducative" (p. 134). Such miseductative institutions distort communications, such as the food animal industry does with its labeling and advertising. Drew, a former Army Ranger, observed how his fellow Rangers acquired their allegiance to meat eating, and their reaction to his conversion to veganism:

> It was just that animal consumption had been ground in their minds since they were born. Their parents ate meat. They taught them to eat meat. Just as my parents ate meat and taught me to eat meat. That's all they ever knew. They would watch the McDonald's commercials, and the milk commercials, and that's all they knew....They would say stuff like I wasn't a man anymore because I didn't partake in eating animal flesh.

Franz, a university professor, provided this (possibly unintentional) metaphor for how the speciesist ideology is transmitted and sustained: "What you get fed as a child you think is right."

Ideological power intensified within the personal dimension. Family and friends often constrained or initially inhibited the vegans' adoption of a non-speciesist ideology. Lanny "broke down and bowed to [my family's] pressure" when they threatened not to eat the holiday dinner at his house unless he served meat. Lena, a design artist, lost a friend of 20 years, who made fun of her and taunted her with descriptions of eating lamb chops. Roger, whose mother disagreed with his veganism, said, "Every time I go and visit my mother it's like, "I'd like to give you something to eat, but we've got butter in everything." Through subtle, sometimes cunning, and often overt objections by close others, the personal lives of these vegans were often tumultuous as they first began to adopt a vegan perspective.

Successful at becoming vegan, the participants overcame these challenges and emerged with an intact transformed ideology, albeit at a personal price. The sustained power of the normative ideology, however, brought subtle changes in the vegans' praxis over time. No longer shocked by the cruelty, and now worn down by institutional and personal challenges to their veganism, their praxis became less outspoken. Many stopped talking about their vegan ideology to non-vegans. This change was explained by the vegans as putting their nonviolence into action, or as the need to adopt some kind of normal existence. A critical reading of their narratives, however, reveals the unconscious power of the normative ideology to regulate to conformity. The power of this ideology to unprehensively modify a praxis of resistance presents evidence for the powerful and constraining effects of the dominant ideology over time.

The vegans' communication, within the context of speciesist institutions and individual others, became less outspoken, more conforming. Maire, for example, stopped trying to "convert people....and a lot of my changing the way I would approach people was from being slapped down." Cary had previously been an activist. Now, he says, "It's changed. I used to be unafraid of anybody...You know now it's a matter of tact and people have their own views and they're entitled to their views." The vegans came to believe that they could be most effective in promoting veganism by silencing their own voices, discussing veganism only when invited, muting what they believed to be the truth, and living by example. Thus, they learned to avoid confrontations with the dominant culture, in spite of their continued discourse among themselves and their commitment to remain vegan. Sometimes, they even compromised their veganism. Franz said he would never eat meat, even as a guest, but "if they make a lasagna which contains cheese, or something that contains a moderate amount of eggs, for example, I probably will eat it, to not cause a stir and just be respectful." Without exception, the vegans became more content with and more committed to their vegan ideology, but less apt to share that ideology with non-vegans, except in non-confrontational or invited situations.

The Limits of Transformation Theory

The purposes of this analysis were 1) to explore the role of power in transformational learning, and 2) assess whether transformation theory's treatment of power is adequate to explain the transformational learning of ethical vegans. The analysis uncovered the pervasive strength of the normative speciesist ideology, manifested in the lifeworld through institutional and personal dimensions. Moreover, the unprehensiveness of this systematic ideology was revealed by a critical reading of its influence over time. Unconsciously but relentlessly, it shaped the praxis of individuals who became entrapped by it, even as they resisted it. These individuals undoubtedly transformed their speciesist meaning perspective. But is such transformation emancipatory, as Mezirow suggests? Does it extend to the social world, or is it ultimately intrapersonal?

Transformation theory recognizes the need to confront normative ideologies through "critical reflection, rational discourse, and collective participatory action" (Mezirow, 1995, p. 68). But how, when normative ideologies are so deeply entrenched as shown by this study, can this occur? Inglis (1997) suggested that we need a better understanding of power. He parceled power into two types—empowerment and emancipation. Empowerment is the capacity to operate within the existing ideology, and emancipation is resistance and challenge to such ideology. The vegans in this study were empowered to substantially transform their personal ideology, but their cultural emancipation was never fully realized. From sustained but often unconscious acts of systematic power against their vegan ideology, these participants succumbed to the normative ideology, acting "in a way which precisely prevents...thematization" (Hart, 1985, p. 126), or exposure and discourse about the status of non-human animals. The vegans' self-silencing suggests that power must be continually analyzed and challenged by the learner if true emancipatory learning is to occur. Transformative learning otherwise runs the risk of becoming a mechanism for self control (Inglis, 1997), evident in the gradual social conformance of these vegans even as their personal commitment increased.

Transformation theory, in spite of its considerable contributions to understanding adult learning, does not adequately address the effect of power on the transformative learning and emancipatory praxis of ethical vegans. Power may be ameliorated by critical reflection, rational discourse, and collective participatory action as suggested by Mezirow, but such activities must be sustained over time in the face of formidable odds. Transformation theory failed to account for the enormity and temporal demands of this task for these ethical vegans. It is not enough to recognize the need to confront power. Understanding how power operates and resisting its subtle regulation must also become the transforming learner's continuing challenge.

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Transformation Theory - Postmodern Issues

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Abstract: This paper briefly comments on selected issues raised by postmodern writers regarding Transformation Theory, as developed by the author. Issues include situated learning, autonomy, teleology, meta-narratives, reason and the self. A brief summary of Transformation Theory will be available at this presentation.

There is much about the postmodern critique that both supports and challenges the validity of Transformation Theory. I agree with Foucault who interprets modernity and postmodernity as oppositional attitudes, present in any epoch or period, that assume a continuing critical dialectic, a discourse. As there are no fixed truths or totally definitive knowledge and circumstances change, the human condition may be best understood as a continuous effort to negotiate contested meanings. That is why transformative learning, with its emphasis on contextual understanding, critical reflection on assumptions and validating meaning through discourse, is so important. Milan Kundera in *The Book of Laughter and Forgetting* wisely suggests that if there were too much incontestable meaning in the world we would succumb under its weight.

Critical reflection of assumptions is at the heart of both postmodern critique and Transformation Theory. Both teaches us to be critical of all forms of foundationalism, of totalizing and definitive explanations and theories and the dominant take-for-granted paradigms. Both agree that the discourses of science, truth and progress cannot be taken for granted, and that we should be skeptical of all theories and frames of reference - including Transformation Theory and postmodernism. Both celebrate diversity and seek social justice. We have a mutual aim to avoid closure of certainty, seek openness to new experience with new and multiple meanings, accept the possibility of uncertainty and unpredictability while recognizing difference and otherness. We both reject the notion that 'emancipation' becomes a search for certainty and control through definitive knowledge, totalizing explanation and the elimination of difference. Both foster recognition of the tension between the goals of emancipation and democracy and the ubiquity of arbitrary power and oppression. Both seek to create multicultural learning environments free of sexist, racist and imperialistic discourses. To become critically reflective of assumptions leads postmodern and transformative thinkers to challenge the social consequences of any concept of reason, progress, autonomy, education, common humanity or emancipation.

However, there are significant differences between these two orientations. Perhaps the most important pertains to a tendency of postmodern critique to show how these concepts, historically associated with the Enlightenment and interpreted in the Western rational tradition, have tacitly produced negative social results and hense to categorically reject them in any form, regardless of their current reference or meaning. The negative judgment of how these concepts have historically functioned in society appears from the postmodern view to render them no longer viable, regardless of their new or changing meaning in contemporary contexts, including Transformation Theory. They tend to become negative labels. Transformation Theory sees each of these concepts as contested meanings and respects the postmodern sensibility but, rather than throw out the baby with the bath water, attempts to redefine their meaning in a contemporary context of adult learning.

Situated Learning

The two ways of understanding differ in whether the content of a comprehensive learning theory must be dictated exclusively by cultural interests. The who, what, when, where, why and how of learning may be only understood as "situated" in a specific cultural context. Postmodern emphasis is on cultural relativity. This often results in writing off any effort to generalize beyond what is situated in a particular culture. Transformation Theory suggests a generic learning process that is interpreted and selectively encouraged or discouraged by contemporary cultures. It suggests that human beings have much in common, including their connectedness, their desire to understand and their spiritual incompleteness. Cultures enable or inhibit the realization of common human interests, ways of communicating and learning capabilities.

Insofar as their conditions and experience permit, adults in contemporary cultures tend to:

(1) seek the meaning of their experience
(2) engage in deliberate mindful efforts to learn
(3) rely upon beliefs and understandings that produce interpretations and opinions that are more true or justified than those based upon other beliefs
(4) accept others as agents with interpretations of their experiences that may prove true or justified
(5) validate contested beliefs and understandings through reflective discourse - assess their supporting reasons and assumptions in order to arrive at a tentative best judgment - as a sometime alternative to resorting to tradition, authority or force to make a judgement
(6) understand the meaning of what is communicated by becoming aware of the *assumptions* (intent, truthfulness, qualifications) of the person communicating and the truth, appropriateness and authenticity of what is being communicated
(7) make meaning of our experience through acquired frames of reference - sets of orienting assumptions and expectations with cognitive, affective and conative dimensions - that shape, delimit and sometimes distort our understanding
(8) transform our frames of reference by becoming critically reflective of their assumptions to make them more dependable when the beliefs and understandings they generate become problematic.

Mindful learning is defined by Langer (p. 4) as the continuous creation of new categories, openness to new information, and an implicit awareness of more than one perspective. Mindless learning involves relying on past forms of action or previously established distinctions and categories.

It is important to distinguish between the process of learning described above and adult education. While Transformation Theory holds that there are elements of a common learning process found within the experience of different cultures, there can be no question that education is always culturally "situated." Transformation Theory is a learning theory, but one that explicitly addresses adult educators. As an occupation, adult education, has historically been a cultural product of Europe and North America and has been identified with the development of autonomy, equality, social justice and democracy. For Transformation Theory, the meaning of these beliefs need to be validated through a continuing process of critical reflection on assumptions and discourse.

Autonomy as an Educational Goal

"...the postmodern critique 'stabs at the very heart of the most cherished ideals of Western culture [particularly that of] personal autonomy as an educational goal.'" (Usher and Edwards, p. 25) This view is predicated upon an assumption that autonomy and the exercise of individual agency involves fitting the individual into a culturally defined pre-cast "autonomous" mold that somehow denies the fact that the learner is *inscribed* - "constructed by discourses and signifying systems, decentered through language, society and the unconscious," (Usher and Edwards, *op.cit.*) "Emancipation," for the postmodern critic, is interpreted as a misguided search for certainty and control through deceptively definitive knowledge, totalizing explanations and the elimination of difference.

Clearly the postmodern critic is correct in pointing to the implication of the social order in the very being of the subject, the source of a tension which shapes the mutually interactive relationship between the subject and sociality, the constitutive social form. However, to then reify this relationship and depict the adult education process as a cultural cookie cutter and autonomy as fitting the learner into a precast mold, including a blind acceptance of current social injustice and exclusion, trapped by cultural assumptions and unable to become critically reflective of those inscribed by society, is an incomplete interpretation of autonomy at best. Usher and Edwards (p. 223) ask, "If 'emancipation' and 'knowledge' are chimeras deployed in the exercise of an omnipresent power, what point is there in challenging dominant practices?" These authors extol experiential learning as more in keeping with the postmodern sensibility than classroom instruction. But there is nothing about experiential learning that assures that it will be critically reflective of assumptions or that the validity of beliefs will be critically assessed through a continuing process of discourse of assessing supporting and opposing reasons. Transformative learning is learning to see *through* one's experience to discover what has been taken-for-granted.

To deny the potential of transforming frames of reference is to even preclude the possibility of the learner coming to share a postmodern perspective. The emancipatory process of fostering autonomy is precisely that of encouraging transformative learning through enhancing context awareness, critical reflection of assumptions, discourse and reflective action. It is not movement from a false belief to a true one but rather from an unexamined to a critically examined belief.

For the postmodern critic, truth may be relative to discursive practices, but if it follows that any position is understood to be as good as any other, then there are no grounds for attempting to foster transformative learning to improve the quality of one's understanding or for fighting injustice or oppression. Transformation Theory holds that assertions are tested for truth empirically and, when this is not feasible, are assessed for their justification through a continuing process of critical discourse. We tentatively accept the beliefs and understandings that meet these tentative tests of validity when they generate opinions and judgments that are more dependable than those based upon other beliefs and understandings.

Transformative Theory as Teleology

A related postmodern view is to be categorically critical of the teleological. By definition, teleology imbues development with an order, purpose and goal. The issue there is whether or not that order, purpose and goal is tacitly imposed on the learner to move her from where she is to where the educator or society wants her to be - to conform to the desired outcome, "for her own good." This implies an effort to get the learner to agree with the educator's beliefs. Pietrykowski writes, "The power exercised by the adult educator...is...a means to structure and regulate learner behavior in accordance with a set of goals chosen by the educator." (p. 68)

There are two issues here. One is the question of who defines the objectives and goals of the educational process. In adult education, these decisions are, ideally, *negotiated* between the learner and the educator, not tacitly imposed by the educator. A second issue is the assumption that the function of adult education is to move the learner from a false way of thinking to a true one as defined by the educator. Transformation Theory is a description of a learning process by which the subject moves from an unexamined way of thinking to a more examined and critically reflective way and hense a more dependable way of interpreting meaning. The focus of the educator is on facilitating a continuing process of critical inquiry wherever it leads the learner. There are no "anticipated learning outcomes" in transformative learning.

As an educational theory, Transformation Theory is culturally based in Western democracy but is critically reflective in assessing democracy's inherent Telos. This holds that learners have the potential to become self-motivated and self-directed, rational, empathic, to participate in collaborative discourse and to become capable of exercising individual agency and to act reflectively.

As an educational theory, Transformation Theory's vision

> ...deals with how individuals may be empowered to learn to free themselves from unexamined ways of thinking that impede effective judgment and action. It also envisions an ideal society composed of communities of educated learners engaged in a continuing collaborative inquiry to determine the truth or arrive at a tentative best judgment about alternative beliefs. Such a community is cemented by empathic solidarity, committed to the social and political practice of participatory democracy, informed through critical reflection and would collectively take reflective action, when necessary, to assure that social systems and local institutions, organizations and their practices are responsive to the human needs of those they service. (Mezirow, p. 72)

Transformation Theory as Meta-narrative

Lyotard (1984) writes that behind modern scientific knowledge is a meta-narrative, metadiscourse or grand narrative. This refers to a paradigm, an implicit frame of reference held in common. Humanistic discourse and the values of the Enlightenment are challenged as meta-narratives by postmodern thinkers who ask

> "Whose reason and whose control? Progress for whom? Who becomes free? Who is cast as the Other, to be dominated and excluded?"...We need only remind ourselves of the power of terms such as 'progress', 'development',' empowerment', 'emancipation' and 'enlightenment'...whatever emancipatory message they may contain can have oppressive consequences when 'emancipation' becomes a search for certainty and control through definitive knowledge, totalising explanations and the elimination of difference." (Usher and Edwards, p. 31)

These concepts may have indeed led to oppressive consequences when they "become a search for certainty and control through definitive knowledge, totalising explanations and the elimination of difference." But what about when they do not become such a search, when, instead, they focus on finding more dependable understandings, context awareness, critical reflection on assumptions and validating contested meaning through discourse as in transformative learning? Postmodern critics often fail to recognize the difference. I have elsewhere noted,

> Postmodernists who dichotomize local and more comprehensive ways of understanding learning ("totalizing narratives") must provide us with arguments and/or evidence that localized and situated learning alone can provide educators with more useful insight than those that include more broadly generalized learning experience...It is not enough to simply express an opinion about the presumed superior value of situated or of a primary, if not exclusive, focus on the deep structures of power than govern our lives. The test of a totalizing narrative or another belief or frame of reference is whether it works, yields better understanding than an alternative belief, whether opinions resulting are for the most part true or more often true than those to which alternative explanations would lead. (Mezirow, p. 66)

These same considerations pertain to the resistance of postmodern critics to the concept of ideals that presume to transcend local culture. For them, ideals become meta-narratives with an inherent Telos and are always suspect. We can all agree that learning is profoundly influenced by its specific context and may be analyzed as localized and situated. The question remains, however, whether the process of such learning may be best understood without recourse to identifying commonalties in the learning process that contribute to its effectiveness and may indeed transcend a local culture.

Transformation Theory delineates the optimal conditions for effective discourse and suggests that these conditions also constitute optimal ("ideal") conditions of learning in any culture that wants to foster transformative learning. Are these optimal conditions for transformative learning to be interpreted as a "totalizing narrative" and rejected out of hand? Upon what evidence is such a judgment based? Are all findings that transcend a local culture to be considered valueless without assessing their worth? I suspect that in attempting to understand our lives we cannot do without meta-narratives but we need to become critically reflective of their assumptions and consequences.

Reason

> It is reason that is considered to be the most natural, innate characteristic of 'man'. The road to autonomy and emancipation is traversed by living according to the dictates of reason. Autonomy, therefore, refers to a situation where, through reason, one obligates and controls oneself from a source inside or natural to oneself, from one's authentic self. More precisely, it is freedom from dependence because what supposedly prevents autonomy is dependence on anything that is external or other to oneself, that is, in effect, unnatural or 'other' to reason. (Usher and Edwards, p. 136)

Postmodern thought holds that there are many different rationalities. So does Transformation Theory. In particular, rationality refers to assessing reasons supporting one's options as objectively as possible and choosing the most effective means available to achieve one's objectives. In instrumental learning, rationality is judged by whether we are able to achieve technical success in meeting our objectives (*e.g.*, use methods that result in improved performance). In communicative learning, on the other hand, rationality is judged by our success in coming to an understanding concerning the issues at hand. The presenting and assessing of reasons that support conflicting beliefs is central to Transformation Theory. Reason is not an ideology, if this is understood as the ideas implicated in the very constitution of knowledge in society that hide or legitimate arbitrary power. Reason proceeds ideology; the very act of identifying an ideology as such implies critical reasoning. Critical reflection on the assumptions supporting these ideas emancipates because it dissolves the constraints implicit in unexamined beliefs often predicated upon ideology. Transformation Theory and postmodern thought agree that the rules that govern the terms and conditions of rationality and critical reflection are contested meanings and not exempt from critical reflection on their assumptions.

On the Self

Postmodern critics argue that the belief in a central, unified agency within each person is illusionary. Many specialists in artificial intelligence and psychologists agree. Mark Tennant (1993) has defended Transformation Theory from charges that it implies a unitary self. More recently, Tennant (1998) questions the postmodernist notion of multiple selves and defends a concept of self he sees as more compatible with transformative learning. He notes that while postmodernists have challenged the concept of ideology critique that they believe implies movement of a unitary self from a false to a true consciousness, this does not to apply to transformative learning as the movement is from a less to a more dependable way of knowing. Tennant argues that some level of continuity and coherence of the self, however contingent, is a necessary condition for resistance to domination and oppression. "In many of the sites in which adult educators work,' he observes, "the pursuit of a coherent, continuous self is indispensable to empowerment." He redefines a "situated" self, one that opens up the possibility of refusing the way he or she has been inscribed and of exploring alternative discourses about oneself as a means of resisting domination and oppression "In effect, we learn to read the text into which our self has been inscribed, and we discover that there are alternative readings and therefore and alternative self to be constructed." (1998, p. 373)

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Applying Insights from Cultural Studies to Adult Education: What *Seinfeld* Says About the AERC

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Abstract: The zany adventures of a glamorous British professor who goes to an important international conference but spends most of her time searching for a TV in order to watch her favourite sitcom. Despite her commitment to 'no hugging, no learning', she gains some profound insights into mass culture, adult education, friendship and postmodernity as a result. *Parental guidance suggested.*

Prologue: The Convergence

This paper has grown out of a critical incident in my own learning biography, where a convergence of two cultural events brought together several discrete elements of my personal and professional identity and led me to reflect on aspects of relationships between the mass media and adult education. This is how it came about: early in 1998 I began organising my journey from the UK to San Antonio for that year's AERC. Some time after I had booked my flight it was announced that the transmission of the final episode of the hugely popular television situation comedy *Seinfeld* would take place on 14 May, the day after I had arranged to arrive in Texas. So the fact that I would be in the USA for the AERC meant that I would also have the opportunity to witness a media phenomenon of considerable importance.

As an adult education researcher, I view the AERC as an annual professional milestone which enables me to review the state of research in the field and to make contact with friends and colleagues from around the world who together constitute a significant reference group. I have attended half a dozen AERC events in the last decade and these conferences always provoke me to scrutinise my current professional location and trajectory. As a researcher in media sociology, I conceptualised the final episode of *Seinfeld* as a milestone of a different kind. The finale became a major news story with newspapers predicting the largest audience ever for a sitcom episode and documenting the record-breaking sums being paid by advertisers for commercial slots during the show. Thus the event constituted a powerful case study in the political economy of US television. But the *Seinfeld* finale was also significant to me as a fan of the series. There have been few other cultural artefacts of recent times which have afforded me as much pleasure as this sitcom; no other television show has me cancelling all other engagements (or setting up the video recorder so obsessively).

One source of regret in San Antonio was the absence of other *Seinfeld* enthusiasts with whom to share the experience. Back home in London, my partner was lost in envy at my opportunity to see the show as it was aired; several months after the US transmission, the UK has still to see the finale. A few of my AERC colleagues displayed amused tolerance at my anxiety not to miss a second of the show, and some of them (particularly football supporters), while not sharing my enthusiasm for this series, empathised with my desire to be part of a tribal group with shared cultural icons. As I was about to leave San Antonio at the end of the conference, I met some Canadian colleagues who turned out to be fellow fans. However, for the most part my attempts to engage AERC participants in deeply encoded Seinfeldian communication were futile. Indeed, many colleagues claimed never to have seen an episode of the show, and some declared that they never watched television at all. A particularly memorable example of incomprehension came from a colleague who believed that *Seinfeld* celebrated a decadent and culturally impoverished lifestyle and who seemed affronted that I should revel in the joys of such a text.

Act I, Scene 1: The Plane Ride

As the aeroplane carrying me back to London took off through the yellow skies of Texas, I fast-forwarded extracts from my internal videotape of the conference and reflected upon what I had learned from the San Antonio experience. As always, when the time distortion of transatlantic travel kicks in between the end of the second movie and the arrival of the duty-free trolley, I drifted into the hyperreal sensation of the postmodern subject. I mused on the delights of meetings with old friends in alien seminar rooms and of shared touristic excursions into the shopping mall of the Alamo. Stills from the *Seinfeld* finale mixed into the montage of conference memories. Questions which have intrigued me in one form or another for the last twenty years and which have provided the motor for much of my professional and personal endeavour over that time formed and reformed in my consciousness:

- why are academics so ready to dismiss the artefacts of popular culture as trivial, intellectually superficial and aesthetically worthless?
- should I feel guilty about enjoying *Seinfeld* so much?
- in what sense is a conference like a sitcom or any other kind of text?
- why is the analysis of postmodernity such fun and so difficult?
- why are so many texts of postmodern theory so deeply dull?
- why have adult education and cultural studies (at least in the UK) become largely divorced from one another (and why have I reproduced this separation in my own professional practice)?
- how can debates about popular culture inform the study of adult education?
- what can be learned from a cultural artefact like *Seinfeld* about aspects of experience such as gender and class relations, ethnicity and friendship?
- what is the relationship between my reactions to *Seinfeld* as a cultural critic and the affective response I experience as a fan of the show?

The rest of this paper constitutes a preliminary sketch of some answers to these questions.

Act I Scene 2: The Flashback

I became an adult educator in the 1970s, steeped in the British university tradition of liberal adult education. By that time I also had a more or less established identity as a media sociologist. But before I applied either of those labels to myself I was a committed fan of popular culture.

My earliest memories are interwoven with television images; like many other British families, mine acquired a television set around the time of the Coronation of the present Queen in 1953. During my early childhood the days of the week were distinguished from one another by the pre-school television programmes broadcast each day: *Picture Book* on Mondays, *Andy Pandy* on Tuesdays, *The Flowerpot Men* on Wednesdays and so on. My interests in the artefacts of popular culture continued throughout childhood and adolescence but it never occurred to me that these interests might have any connection with school or university subjects until I encountered Richard Hoggart's *The Uses of Literacy* (1958) in the context of an undergraduate sociology course. This was the first book I had ever come across which treated popular newspapers and television quiz shows as the subject of serious analysis and it was a major revelation. Another text which grabbed my imagination around the same time was Robert Warshow's *The Immediate Experience* (1962), a collection of essays about movies, comics and theatre, which included a particularly memorable essay on the comic strip *Krazy Kat*, entitled *Woofed with Dreams*.

Act I Scene 3: The Founding Parents

While I was misspending my early years in a small Midlands town among superhero comics, game shows, soap operas and the subcultural delights of rock music, British cultural and media studies were hatching out nearby. Two of the most important centres for the development of theory and research on the mass media were established in the 1960s: the University of Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies and the University of Leicester Centre for Mass Communications Research. The two centres evolved contrasting theoretical and methodological paradigms: Birmingham derived its approach primarily from literary criticism and focused mainly on the content of media texts while Leicester drew on sociology and political economy and emphasised the importance of studying the contexts of media production. By the 1970s, when I became a graduate student in the Leicester centre, both institutions had adopted a marxist model for the study of culture. But although I did not become aware of the common antecedents until later, both centres also shared roots in university adult education.

A number of scholars who were influential in the development of cultural and media studies were also associated with the development of the philosophy and practice of adult education. For example, Richard Hoggart, founder of the Birmingham centre, was concerned with extra-mural teaching in the 1950s (see, for example, Hoggart, 1959). James Halloran, the founding director of the Leicester centre who carried out influential work on the social effects of television in the 1960s, began his career as a tutor in adult education. Other notable scholars whose work helped to shape the direction of British cultural and media studies, such as Raymond Williams, E.P. Thompson and Stuart Hall, also worked in adult education in the early stages of their careers. A painstakingly detailed account of the history of British cultural studies, particularly as exemplified in Birmingham, can be found in McGuigan, 1992.

In recent years the two fields have followed diverging trajectories. Cultural and media studies have moved from being minority interests to major growth areas in British higher education. From their beginnings as subjects followed by a handful of postgraduate students they now feature among the most popular choices for undergraduates, and there is a massive literature dealing with media texts and processes. However, there is little evidence of insights from cultural and media studies being applied to the study of adult education, although writers such as Giroux and Shannon (1997) place the analysis of school-based education firmly in the study of culture. Now and again a conference paper on continuing education surfaces which contains analysis of some aspect of popular culture such as the romantic novel (Jarvis, 1994), the baseball star (Boshier, 1993) or the comic strip (Carter and Howell, 1998), but in general there is little evidence of interest in such features of cultural life amongst adult educators on either side of the Atlantic.

Act II, Scene 1: The Show About Something

Seinfeld was first seen on the NBC television network in 1989 and ran for nine seasons, reaching some 180 half-hour episodes. By the time the show reached its final episode in May 1998, it had become the most popular programme on American television and Seinfeld himself is said to have turned down an offer of $5 million per show to continue with further series.

The premise of the programme is simple: it follows the daily lives of four friends in New York City, chronicling their interactions with one another and with the characters and situations of middle-class Manhattan life. The programme's central character, Jerry Seinfeld, is a stand-up comic (played by Jerry Seinfeld, a stand-up comic). The other three central characters are Elaine, Seinfeld's ex-girlfriend; George, Seinfeld's best friend since high school; and Kramer, Seinfeld's next-door neighbour. The 'ordinariness' of the situations depicted in the show — waiting for a table in a Chinese restaurant, losing a car in a parking garage, arguing about the messages conveyed in the positioning of shirt-buttons (if the second button on a shirt is too high, 'it looks like you live with your mother'), debating about the optimum milk level in bowls of cereal or the rules about breaking off a relationship — led to its being labelled 'a show about nothing'. However, this description fails to do justice to the intricacy of the myriad plotlines woven together in each episode or to the finely-crafted dialogue in which every line carries elements of the story forward.

Seinfeld is suffused with postmodern themes. To begin with, the boundary between reality and fiction is frequently blurred: this is illustrated in the central device of having Jerry Seinfeld play the character Jerry Seinfeld. In the show's fourth season, several episodes revolved around the narrative of Jerry and George (whose character is co-creator Larry David's alter ego) pitching 'a show about nothing' based on the everyday life of a stand-up comedian to NBC. The reaction of the fictional NBC executives, by all accounts, mirrored the initial responses of those who eventually commissioned *Seinfeld*. The fourth season ends with 'The Pilot', an episode focusing on the casting, taping and screening of the show-within-the-show, *Jerry*. This episode also illustrates neatly the self-referential quality which is one of *Seinfeld*'s hallmarks. The series finale was so replete with references to earlier shows as to render it largely incomprehensible to those not already well-versed in the personae and preoccupations of the *Seinfeld* universe.

Another instance of what Berger (1998) labels 'the postmodern presence' in *Seinfeld* is its catalogue of intertextual references. The show makes constant allusions to other cultural artefacts, mining popular television from *I Love Lucy* to *Letterman*, and describing a smooth segue from *I Pagliacci* to *Bugs Bunny* in the course of a short scene. Superhero characters from Superman to Green Lantern are a frequent source of knowing references; Newman, the post office worker who is the focus for Jerry's hatred and scorn, is depicted as Lex Luthor to Seinfeld's Superman. 'The Betrayal' echoes the narrative structure and themes of the Harold Pinter play *Betrayal*. The action in this episode moves backwards in time, illustrating the time distortion and tendency to scramble linear narratives which are also common features of postmodern texts.

Seinfeld is notable for challenging the boundaries of what are considered acceptable topics for prime-time television. In 'The Contest', Jerry, George, Kramer and Elaine enter into a competition with one another to see who can refrain from masturbating for the longest — or, in the inventive wordplay of the show, remain 'master of their domain' or 'queen of the castle'. The writers manage the remarkable feat of sustaining dialogue which is simultaneously explicit and ambiguous. In 'The Deal', an episode which is one of my personal favourites, Jerry and Elaine engage in an experiment to enable them to revisit their sexual relationship while sustaining their warm and enjoyable friendship. They agree upon a set of rules (such as an embargo on telephone calls the day after sex, and 'sleeping over is optional') designed to enable them to combine 'this' (the friendship) with 'that' (the sex). The script is written so deftly that a frank discussion of sexual mores is conducted entirely in euphemisms. There are, it seems, no limits to the topics which *Seinfeld* writers are prepared to tackle: death, disability, ethnicity, sexuality and bodily functions are all favourites, while politically correct attitudes are dissected and rendered risible. In 'The Outing', Jerry and George are mistaken for a gay couple and wrestle with the tension between their desire to correct the error and their anxiety not to appear homophobic, coining one of the show's many enduring catchphrases ('not that there's anything wrong with that') in the process.

Act II Scene 2: The Ethnomethodology

Seinfeld is, of course, a text open to multiple readings and decodings. One academic critic characterises *Seinfeld* as a 'comedy of manners' in the tradition of Sheridan and Wilde and draws on *The Civilising Process*, Norbert Elias's (1978) historical-sociological analysis of the development of civility in Western cultures, to advance the argument that *Seinfeld* is a text which 'perfectly captures the complex pleasures and anxieties associated with the continued maintenance and practices of contemporary American manners' (Pierson, 1997: 5).

For me a major element in the show's appeal is its sharp social observation and its construction of the everyday as anthropologically strange. I take keen pleasure in the way that *Seinfeld* illuminates the minutiae of social interaction, such as the micropolitics of present-giving and -recycling ('degifting' and 'regifting'), the art of extricating oneself from unwanted social encounters (using the 'excuse Rolodex') or the implicit rules governing friends' access to each others' property ('pop-in' rights; 'the covenant of the keys'). There are close parallels here with the pleasure I have derived from examples of social scientific literature which have in the past provided me with new insights into behaviour previously taken for granted. Relevant examples are to be found in the literature of ethnomethodology, such as

'Notes on the Art of Walking' (Ryave and Schenkein, 1974) or in the work of Erving Goffman. There are clear parallels between Goffman's discussion of the negotiation of power relations in everyday social encounters where

> 'the work adjustment of those in service occupations will often hinge upon a capacity to seize and hold the initiative in the service relation, a capacity that will require subtle aggressiveness on the part of the server when he is of lower socio-economic status than his client' (Goffman, 1959: 22)

and George's plans in 'The Pez Dispenser' for staging 'a preemptive breakup' with a socially superior girlfriend in order to gain and maintain 'hand' in the relationship.

Act III Scene 1: The Irony

At this point I need to return to the question posed in the title to this paper and consider what *Seinfeld* says about the AERC. Over the years I have played with the parallels to be drawn between conferences and written texts and in 1989 I attempted to deconstruct the process of writing a PhD thesis by turning my own thesis (Miller, 1989) into an imaginary conference. It is to such a line of analysis that I now return.

There is an irony in attempting to unpack educational aspects of *Seinfeld*. After all, one of the show's cardinal rules, articulated by Larry David, was 'no hugging, no learning'. However, I do not take this to mean that the show is devoid of either affection or profound insights. Rather, its creators have been determined to avoid the formulaic narrative clichés and predictable emotional rhythms on which many popular sitcoms are based. The traditional structure of a television script follows a pattern which begins with an everyday reality which is disrupted in the first act of an episode; the unexpected happening is developed in the second act and the world is restored to rights by the end of the twenty-five minutes. Deviant behaviour is generally not rewarded or allowed to persist in the sitcom world, and social gaffes are tidied up and used as the basis for characters to learn, grow and make up. In *Seinfeld*, social disruption is frequently left unresolved, and suggestions of enhanced maturity are treated with suspicion ('Any kind of growth really irritates me' says George in 'The Deal'). But in its determination to eschew easy answers to social complexities *Seinfeld* displays a welcome disinclination to underestimate the television audience with shallow emotions or simplistic outcomes.

Act III Scene 2: The Friendship

As I wrote at the beginning of this paper, the AERC constitutes for me an important annual professional milestone. It provides me with a snapshot map of the field of adult education; with a quick immersion in contemporary andragogic discourses; a cultural island on which to explore some current preoccupations. Being a foreign island rather in the style of Bizarro World, it gives me a fresh perspective on back-home realities. These metaphors go some way to capturing the cognitive gains from the AERC experience, but there is an affective dimension to the experience which is missing from the metaphors; the AERC is, above all, about friendship and affinity. Some of the people I have met through the AERC are amongst my most valued friends.

Seinfeld is also a text about friendship (and about the struggle to make sense of darkness as well as light in human behaviour). The show, as many critics acknowledge, is built out of ensemble playing and much of its humour grows out of the complex web of obligations and interdependencies in which Jerry, George, Elaine and Kramer are enmeshed ('a group dynamic rooted in jealousy, rage, insecurity, despair, hopelessness, and a touching lack of faith in one's fellow human beings' (Tucker, 1998: 13)). The four central characters frequently behave deceitfully or selfishly, but despite being aware of each others' failings and foibles, they remain loyal and tolerant towards one another. Jerry's friends can help themselves to the contents of his refrigerator without explanation or a need for mechanical reciprocity. In the iconography of magazine articles about the series, they are shown in intertextual variants on the gang of four: in the style of the *With the Beatles* album cover; as 'Fantastic Four' superheroes; as comrades from *Star Wars*, and (on the cover of *Rolling Stone* in the week the series ended) as the Tin Man, the Cowardly Lion, the Scarecrow and Dorothy from *The Wizard of Oz*.

The best experiences of AERC are the moments of camaraderie and the feelings of inhabiting a common social reality which are often cemented in shared jokes. I enjoy the sensation of being Elaine amongst people whose Snapple I can share, or upon whose spongeworthiness I can muse.

Epilogue: The Punchline

In this paper I have attempted to highlight an example of the ways in which a popular cultural artefact is an important source of pleasure and meaning in my life. I have tried to demonstrate the value of interrogating my own cognitive and affective reactions to cultural products and to show how images and narratives from popular culture are woven into my daily life.

The pleasure I derive from *Seinfeld* is one shared with many others, if not with many other adult educators. With the growth in the use of media such as the Internet and cable television for educational purposes and the shift towards the information society, it is increasingly important for educators to take seriously the processes by which media texts are produced and disseminated, and to understand the ways in which media images and constructions pervade all our lives. Furthermore, since interaction with texts of popular culture forms the basis for much of adult students' experience of their world, and the sense which they make of their experience, I would argue that in order to strengthen their theoretical understanding and enhance their practice adult educators need to engage with and take seriously media phenomena like *Seinfeld*. Or, as Jerry and George might have it, 'engaging with media texts ... yada yada yada ... greater understanding of adult education'.

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Educating Labour's Professionals

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Abstract: This study examined the nature of education and training for full-time labour union officials in Canada. It was designed to complement similar studies in other countries and more general discussions of labour education.

Unions occupy a key position within the economies of most industrialized countries. Although the percentage of the workforce that is unionized is usually far less than 50%, union involvement with the implementation of technical and social change in industry has an acute effect on society generally and, more specifically, on the working conditions of the population. Crucial to these developments are the cadre of full-time officials who act as the union movement's key administrators and organizers. The most extensive studies of their work (Kelly & Heery, 1994; Watson, 1988) indicate that union officials have a wide range of responsibilities which falls mainly into three broad functions: servicing and representing union members, organizing and recruiting new members, and representing and promoting the policies of the union. Union officials are also expected to keep up with technological, economic and legislative changes. For example, recent developments in computer and office technology have necessitated changes in working practices that have tended to aggravate an already excessive workload for union officials. In addition, their work is often significantly affected by legislative changes and the transformations in industry and employment brought about by economic globalisation (Borgers, 1997; Brecher & Costello, 1998; Turner, 1991). Union officials can be seen as the labour movement's professionals, equivalent to professional workers in other spheres. Most definitions of professionalism refer to the exclusive possession of expert knowledge and preparation through formal education and training. Nevertheless, as Kelly and Heery contend in their study of British trade unions, "few unions develop a strategic approach to training, in which there is an attempt to specify the objectives of training policy, identify officers' training needs, and provide a system of release and cover for officers involved in training" (1994, p. 62). Consequently, this study was designed to see to what extent this might be true in other countries and it examined how Canadian union officials are trained for their work.

Literature Review

The forms and functions of labour education have been well-documented (e.g., Dwyer, 1977; Gray & Kornbluh, 1990; Rogin & Rachlin, 1968; Newman, 1993; Spencer, 1994). These studies variously discuss the general provision of labour education, its goals, and the various ideologies that support it. However, although crucial to an overall understanding of the role of education within the labour movement, such studies rarely examine, in any detail, the different types of education provided for those at different levels within union organisations. Specifically, they do not deal with the education and training provided for unions' full-time employees.

Indeed, studies of such training are generally hard to find. Although labour movements worldwide conduct extensive training for their members and officials and regularly monitor and evaluate their provision, few reports are published. In the English-speaking world, only Olssen's (1982) New Zealand study, the US studies of Allen (1962) and Kerrison and Levine (1960) and the British studies of Brown and Lawson (1972), Fisher and Holland (1990), and the Trades Union Congress (1972) focus, specifically, on the education and training of labour's professionals.

Each of these studies considers the educational background and prior formal education of those who become union officials. Unlike other professions, trade union work does not require much in the way of formal academic requirements. As Fisher and Holland (1990) identify, selection criteria value commitment to the union and a proven record of relevant industrial experience count far more than any formal or professional qualifications. However, the educational attainment of union officials is increasing. In 1972, Brown identified that only 20% of union officials had any formal post-secondary educational qualifications. This figure then progressively grew to 44% in 1982 (Olssen), 62% in 1990 (Fisher & Holland), and 75% in 1994 (Kelly & Heery). While this increase can be partly explained by an improvement in educational standards generally, it also indicates that unions are increasingly expecting their officials to possess formal educational credentials.

Rather than receiving preparation for their job through formal education, most union officials appear to acquire the necessary expertise and attributes through some form of "lay apprenticeship." Studies indicate that, prior to appointment, full-time union officials have already served several years as lay activists acquiring negotiating and public-speaking skills as well as a detailed knowledge of the union's constitution, rules, and administrative procedures, and the relevant industrial consultative and bargaining machinery. However, although some unions require prospective officials to pass an examination, there is "no generally-accepted corpus of theoretical or practical knowledge, no standard training for entrants, and no professional qualification for trade union work" (Kelly & Heery, p. 61).

In some countries (most notably Great Britain), unions expect their officials to supplement their expertise with more formal training. For example, a Trades Union Congress 1991 survey showed that almost two-fifths of Britain's unions had sent at least 25% of their officers on training courses in the past year and more than 50% in the previous five years. Much of this training was provided by the TUC itself who operated an extensive series of national and regional short courses (of between one and five days duration). In the USA, where the AFL/CIO has been less involved in the direct provision of education for its affiliates, union officials who require further training are more likely to be encouraged to attend labour studies programs arranged through a local college or university. The popularity of this approach can been seen from its extent: in 1990, there were over 50 post-secondary institutions in 30 states listing some form of labour studies program. One of the longest running examples of this type of program is the Harvard University's Trade Union Program which currently provides an intensive 10-week program that examines contemporary challenges facing labour, analyses the economic environment in which unions operate, and leads participants through the theory and practice of strategic planning (Bernard, 1991).

Research Design & Methods

The research design was based on that of a similar prior study (Fisher & Holland, 1990) and considered four inter-related questions: What initial and continuing education and training exists for Canadian full-time labour officials? What is the nature of such training? Who provides it? How is it evaluated? Data was collected by a postal survey of those Canadian unions with more than 10, 000 members (almost 70 organisations) and semi-structured telephone or in-person interviews with 12 individual union officials selected on the basis of geographic and sectoral diversity of union and whether individuals worked in either a union's national or regional office. All interviews were tape-recorded and transcribed for later analysis. The complete data set was then coded and initial concepts and categories were linked into broader themes and patterns to develop increasingly complex concepts.

Findings

As in other countries, Canadian unions typically recruit their full-time officials from within. Local union officers or activists who have distinguished themselves at branch level or at conferences are more likely to be hired than those with little or no local experience. However, from time to time, unions also require the services of more specialist staff--such as economists or researchers or those with media, legal, or computer expertise. Here, unions will be more likely to step outside of their own ranks and recruit from those who have been more professionally or academically educated.

Whatever their function, union officials enjoyed little formal education specifically designed to help them with their work. Although most unions in Canada provide a wealth of resources for shop steward and other lay official training, they were either reluctant or disinclined to offer much educational support towards those who had achieved permanent positions. Most officials are expected to be fully able to perform their jobs when they are hired and hence, require little initial training. If resources permit, new officials are sometimes "teamed" with a more experienced official--perhaps one retiring from similar work--for several days or weeks. However, this practice was not widespread, perhaps because many union official jobs are elected and, therefore, contested. It would certainly be naïve to expect a new official to be trained by someone whom she was replacing. Such teaming was more likely to occur for specific tasks--such as attending arbitration hearings--in which the new officer has little experience and can benefit from a more experienced colleague.

Many unions claimed to encourage new officials to attend local CLC-sponsored courses, labour studies programs offered at provincial colleges and universities and, occasionally, the four-week residential program of the Labour College of Canada. However, most of these programs are not specifically geared for the needs of full-time officials. In fact, several of the officials interviewed indicated that they had little time or inclination for attending such programs and that their education was best advanced by attending local and national conferences. Indeed, several expressed surprise that any education specifically designed for them would be viable. Those officials who had taken part in formal educational opportunities said that they were motivated more by an individual concern to better equip themselves than by any external pressure from their union. Indeed, union officials who identified a need for further education were generally expected to incorporate it into their already heavy work schedules.

Most union specialist and support staff come with specific experience for their particular job and require little initial training. However, skills upgrading and other professional development is seen as necessary from time to time. Here, unions prefer to send the staff member on a specific training program offered by a local educational institution rather than develop their own in-house programs. These courses tended to be one- and two-day seminars on such topics as: how to manage difficult people, time management, computer skills, or facilitating meetings. Ironically, one of the longest courses mentioned was the week-long "train the trainers" courses designed by the CLC to help union officials run education sessions in their localities. Another successful course was one designed specifically to deal with arbitration. "The union realized just how much we were spending on lawyers," said one of its vice-presidents. "We thought we should be putting that money back into the union, so we trained some of our own staff to deal with cases and hearings."

In addition to courses for their officials, several unions were concerned to provide some basic education for their staff (particularly secretarial) who had little or no union background or experience. "They often have no idea about what a union is or what it does...so they don't always seem much help to members who contact us," said one national official. To counteract this, several unions allow their staff to participate in all or part of their regional "new representatives" courses. As one education officer explained: "We've found that an efficient way to introduce them to the union structure and the sorts of things we do. It also helps them grow accustomed to the union culture...and our values."

Finally, unions offered a wealth of suggestions about the types of courses they would like to see offered: language training, communication skills, or on current issues "such as globalization or the MAI [Multilateral Agreement on Investment]", courses for official's spouses and partners, dealing with unions as organisations, management skills--"how to manage different bits of the organization...dealing with people, dealing with decisions, dealing with technology, that sort of stuff", how to do research and write about it in a clear way, and using the internet as a research and advocacy tool.

Discussion

Several unions expressed grave concern about the lack of training provided for full-time officials. As one president put it:

> You get elected to a full-time national position and suddenly you're a manager. And when people elect you the last thing they're thinking is whether you have good management skills. So, things like time management, organizing your own work or organizing other people's work or even how they change from working in an industrial setting to working in an office...they become major issues.

The same issues were also identified at a regional level. "When our folks leave the local and get elected to regional positions they have to learn a whole new set of skills--they have different responsibilities and different concerns and there are different issues," described one regional coordinator. "Really, we don't help them much...they have to figure it out for themselves. So, for the first year they flounder a bit...after that they get the hang of it...but it can sometimes cost us."

Despite these sentiments there appeared to be little concerted effort to develop a systematic program of training for labour's professionals. Clearly, unions have more pressing concerns. In uncertain economic times and climates of wavering public support, unions understandably prefer to focus their energies on protecting the gains they have made. Yet, most senior union officials have themselves participated in the vibrant tradition of labour education in Canada and recognise its crucial role in the building of the labour movement. What might explain this disparity?

There appear to be both personal and structural influences on the provision of education for union officials. One strong personal factor was the identification of an individual need when so much of one's effort goes towards supporting a collective organization. "I'd feel so guilty taking time off," was one official's comment. "I know I'd benefit from more training but the members' problems must come first." Related to this is the often individual nature of a union official's work. As one official explained, "Much of my time is spent developing working relationships, whether with the members or with employers. That's my responsibility...and I can't just leave that or hand off my problems to someone else if I want to go on a course."

An addition influence was the officials' often ambivalent attitudes towards education: "One crucial issue for us--and this relates to all aspects of our education--is the need to balance individual needs with those of the organization. People forget that union education is not just about raising individual awareness or increasing a person's knowledge; it's more seeing those goals in a more collective setting." Yet, attending union courses could be perceived as threatening or involving a loss of face. "Many of us maybe didn't do very well in school," said one national official. "So why would we put ourselves back in that situation if we think it's going to be like high-school?" "You're admitting you don't know something when you're supposed to know everything," said another official. "You've run for this tough job in the union and why would you think you could do it if you didn't know everything?" A final influence was the perception that courses geared towards the management of unions might be too inappropriate or too academic. "The last thing the union movement needs is an MBA," was a typical response. Academic attainment has never counted for much in a union setting. Indeed, too much "book knowledge" is often seen as detrimental and in direct contrast to the highly practical orientation required for union leadership.

Several structural or organizational factors also affect the provision of education for union officials. The first, naturally is a union's size. Briefly, small unions have far fewer resources in general and allocate much less towards labour education. "If you've got a region with only 12 officials and they're spread out across four provinces and two islands...freeing a couple of people up to go on a course is going to be quite difficult." The cost too can be prohibitive: "the amount of money we spend flying people around is enormous." Despite this, unions recognise the value of providing ample opportunities for officials to physically meet. "We've tried video-conferencing or cutting back on the number of meetings," said one official, "but nobody liked it. They said, 'This is our only opportunity for us to meet and get some important work done so don't go screwing it up by only holding it once a year.'"

A second factor involves a union's priorities. Often education has to take second place to a union's other functions such as organizing, servicing members, or negotiating contracts. Because these latter activities are generally the more visible aspects of a union's work (and hence, where members judge union effectiveness) they receive greater prominence. It is significant here that few unions allocate any specific resources or have policies on employee training or appear to operate any system of performance appraisal--a common way of identifying training needs in an organization. "That's one of the things I'd like to develop here," said one national education officer, "but it has to work its way to the top of my priorities. There's just so much we can do."

A third and powerful influence might be best described as relating to a union's organizational culture. Like other organisations, unions have their own cultures--sets of beliefs and values about people, society, and organizational objectives link together with traditions of how people relate to one another. As organisations born out of the continuing struggle for justice, dignity, and human rights, all unions hold democracy and tradition as core cultural attributes. However, beneath those overarching features, each union's culture is unique. Each has its own way of "doing things;" its own particular way of conveying its heritage through rituals, ceremonies, symbols, myths, stories, and physical artifacts.

In his powerful personal memoir, labour educator D'Arcy Martin (1995) speaks of the dynamics or "cross-currents" of union culture which can help identify the supports and barriers for education that exist within unions themselves and the movement generally. One key dynamic--what Martin names the "oppressive/affirmative"--is the presence in unions of inequalities and hierarchies of power. Women officials, for example, are often a significant presence at a local level yet are far less likely to hold a more senior or national post. One senior woman official described her first year as a national official, "It was dreadful...I was running around all over the country, never too sure of what I was doing or where I was going next. I never knew when I'd be home. I felt permanently exhausted. I know other women feel the same...there's got to be a better way of doing it than this." Other officials characterized the selection of officials for further education as itself political: "Sometimes, who the president chooses to send is quite contentious. If you're in favour, you get to go."

Another dynamic noted by Martin--"servicing/mobilizing"--is the ever present need for unions to provide immediate practical help and also create a climate for broader social transformation. This dynamic is often dichotomized into "business" versus "social" unionism--and unions do tend to prefer one approach over the other. However, Martin's point is that such a tension is present in every union activity. Busy officials, ever responsive to the demands of the membership, can always find reasons not to take time out for reflection or planning. Yet, these activities are precisely what many officials claim they'd like from more education. As one senior official who had traveled widely put it, "My experience having looked at a variety of unions in a variety of countries is that the ones that take a more proactive approach and use more strategic planning are the ones that can best deal with the problems of globalisation." For Olssen, these tensions regarding education are related to "a conflict between the traditional aims of unionism as a reaction to unfair privilege and the need to adapt to a society where expertise and specialization are increasingly demanded" (p. 45).

Conclusion

In addition to increasing our understanding of labour education, this study adds to recent adult education literature on professional knowledge (Eraut, 1994; Schön, 1987) and the cultural connotations of learning at work (Leymann & Kornbluh, 1991; Marsick, 1987; Tuomisto, 1993). Further, it would extend the notion of labour education as symbolic capital (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1990) whereby power hierarchies are made visible and maintained and structural inequalities are legitimized. Of course, to unions, the measure of labour education--including that provided for officials--is how far it strengthens labour organization. There are many issues facing unions. Most are deeply concerned over how, structurally, they might face the enormous challenges brought about by economic globalisation and what they see as a concerted world-wide attack to weaken their influence and cut back workers' rights. One strategy lies in expanding their educational provision, and clearly, there is much room for developing further education for their officials.

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Portraits of Social Strangers

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Abstract: This paper discusses the use of art forms, as a way of "teaching and preparing" people experiencing life transitions. The study describes how a gay male graduate student experiences his own recent life shift alongside those explored by two recent immigrant women from Australia and Taiwan to Vancouver, Canada.

Introduction

As we pass by someone we do not know on the street, we imagine. We look at them, their clothes, their skin, their eyes, their walk...and we imagine. We construct a holistic sense of others based upon our prior experience. Generally, we are not accurate, yet, we take our senses as our guide. This is particularly true when some of that difference can be hidden from view. However, there is a way of uncovering the hidden "strangeness" between or among people. One such instance can be explored during the learning process and our role as teachers/facilitators.

Art as Adult Education

Identities, reflected by an individual's lifeworld, is unique to that person. Yet, these perspectives do not remain fixed, rather shifting dramatically as in the case of "culture shock". The source of this shock is when an individual realized he/she is not having their identity validated - their new sense of self (Ishiyama, 1995). This study is designed to remedy this limitation.

A basic assumption supporting art therapy is that it is a kind of "safety net" for projections and that these images hold meaning and value not only for the person but, potentially, for the art counselling group (Zinker, 1978). Another presupposition which reinforces the art-as-pedogogy process is that each person constructs his/her own, individual inner world and because of their self and unique perception creates their own version of "reality" or "truth". Perception is reality within this interpretivist paradigm of being-in-the-world (Boshier, 1994; Zinker, 1978). Within art therapy, the participant gradually realizes how inner assumptions determine how one's interaction patterns develop (Fryrear & Corbit, 1989). Gestalt, like art therapy, is an educaive counselling technique based upon humanistic and existential phenomenological philosophies (Waller, 1993). Both these therapeutic interventions hold five similar beliefs as being central: human actions are not predetermined; there is an importance of choice within human living; it is essential to take responsibility for one's actions; death is inevitable and the fact that everyone dies gives meaning to our life projects of living (Fischer, 1973; Hogan, 1997; Lindauer, 1998; Zinker, 1978).

The imagery left behind after the painting sessions provided value for the group members to reflect back upon themselves through their work at fixed moments in time (Case & Dalley, 1992; Waller, 1993; Zinker, 1978). The use of concrete imagery and pictures is a language more universal than abstract letters and words. Across cultures, symbols often convey similar messages (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994). In addition to painting I also incorporate music because this encourages participants to remain focused in the present moment of painting and less on what the painting "should" look like (Gawain, 1995; McNiff, 1998). Music plays upon creative, intuitive, and emotive mental processing while minimizing the logical, verbal, and censuring aspect (Csikszentimihalyi, 1996; Gawain, 1995).

The Study

This study took place within a community centre attached to a Vancouver neighbourhood. This site was selected because of its centrality within the city, its accessibility, and the availability of rooms for the anticipated study period. The participants were drawn from Vancouver, British Columbia and had to fit certain "criteria". Each person had to have arrived in Canada on a permanent basis within the preceding six to nine months of the study taking place. This was done to capture, according to cross cultural counselling literature, the deepest phase of the culture shock transition - a period when deep and transitory emotions were most profound and evident. Each immigrant had to be prepared to take part in a ten week art therapy/"education" program which met twice a week for a period of four hours per session. Also, each person had to willingly interpret their own works of art orally (removing the requirement for fluency in written English) as well as a willingness to share with the art group their very personal experiences, emotions, thoughts and stories primarily on a one-to-one basis with me, although some group sharing was done as well.

My role as the originator of the study was as co-participant, rather than as "leader." In order to achieve independent functioning I established the overall structure of the group and then allowed the group to take itself where it most needed to explore. The research process included the following:

- Initial contact with the research site to determine availability and costs.
- Posted advertisements in community newspapers for participants, distributed flyers to all the immigrant settlement houses, multicultural organizations, and ethnic media outlets and drew from these responses for the final cohort.
- Met with each participant "informally" and then with all participants as a group. Determined access into each person's private lives. As part of this familiarization of the participants with me and vice versa, I carried out an informal, casual, half day painting workshop.
- Each participant was invited to use the painting process to create illustrations of how they perceived their cultural identity. Attached to this art was a brief written/oral interpretation, done by the creator of the art, of how this painting reflected how each within the group of three saw themselves. The outcome of this exercise was a life-size "body image" painting which reflected how they saw themselves in that particular moment.
- A week before the study I met with each participant individually.
- After each workshop, I took the paintings home to be photographed in order to be returned to the respective artist in time for the next workshop. After the second workshop each person took home their original painting from the previous session to tape record their interpretation of the work with two key thoughts in mind - What was going on in their minds while they were painting (process)?; and What did the painting, as it appeared at the end of the workshop, mean to them (product)? This process was repeated several times throughout the study period.

- One month after the final workshop session, the study group met to complete a second "body image" to relay how they perceived themselves as being, culturally. Self-selected during this meeting was their singular most influential or pivotal painting which best illustrated their moment of greatest revelation or clarity.
- Throughout the process I reflected upon my experiences and participated in the painting process as well with my own personal interpretations.

Themes Arising From The Art of Social Strangers

The first participant, ***Jasmine,*** *was a single, female, "40-something", professional, recent émigré from Taiwan. There she had been employed as a magazine editor for one of that country's largest periodicals; in Canada she was working as a sales clerk at minimum wage and as a freelance newspaper for one of Vancouver's largest daily Chinese newspapers.*

- *Green and magenta.* Green is balanced on its own (Wills, 1993). The colour magenta symbolizes a "letting go" or of shedding one's personal aspects of our selves and is a symbol that we are growing in a different direction while letting go of where we have come from to some degree.
- *Black shadow figure.* The shadow is considered an absence of light. Within Chinese cultures the shadow holds an equality equal to the yin aspect. To have a shadow, in this culture, is considered a lack of personal purity. A shadow is something that is without substance, being a signifier of one's existence.
- *Shadow images, circles, and dots* to symbolize flowers and aspects of Jasmine's self - and body outlines. The flower, in Chinese societies was a symbol of the passive principle taught to women of those cultures. The flower is also a sign of love and harmony within a primeval state (Chevalier & Gheerbrant, 1994).
- *Crowds* - this symbolized how complicated her life had become as the result of her immigration to Canada. In part, she states this was why she sought out the large Chinese community in Vancouver. However, here, the Chinese culture was fraught with difficulty because of the strong animosity between mainland Chinese people and people from Taiwan.
- *Home.* Jasmine sees a vision of home as being an oasis within and away from the larger culture. Yet, Jasmine saw herself as being locked out of the "house." She "seeks what she cannot get [and] gets what she does not seek."
- *Body images* - which delineate the beginning and end points of our time together, were dramatically depicted by Jasmine. Jasmine's first painting, the body image done at the beginning, shows a body outline being painted over and virtually obliterated. The second body image showed Jasmine's body image in a dramatically different light. Her body outline is a bold, energetic red, filled in by solid, bright colours.
- *Pivotal Painting* - The moment of greatest clarity, or inspiration was the painting entitled Just Do It. Her repeated and emphatic phrase of "Just do it", was captured in those red (denoting vital energy) hand prints, as well as within her interpretation of this painting, reflecting a sense of clarity and cohesion.

Zinnia *was a "20-something," female, recently married, recent émigré, with a university education in industrial design, from Australia. Just prior to the study she was married to a*

Danish Canadian; near the end of the study she found her "dream job" working in a high end furniture design firm in Vancouver.

- *Orange,* Zinnia identified as being both feminine energy and a symbol of her native Australia. Colour therapy points out orange as being the colour of femininity, as well as the colour symbolizing the energy associated with creation (Wills, 1993). Purple is always linked with orange in Zinnia's paintings. The colour purple has been said to symbolize self-respect, dignity, and a realm of spiritual awakening or awareness as connected to our sense of self (Wills, 1993).
- *Swirls, splatters, etchings, and roots as shown by thick lines.* The swirl Zinnia saw as a symbol of her energy, without beginning or end, just constantly going. The swirl is seen to be a sign of the repetitiveness of life. Zinnia called the swirl her life energy. The image of roots, and putting down roots appeared in a few of her paintings as well. Splatters were used in a few of Zinnia's paintings as well to highlight the impression of chaos within a depicted scene.
- *Australian Bush Fires,* like forest fires, are both a period of destruction - or of letting go - in order to allow new growth to occur - and so of rejuvenation.
- *Home.* When she finds a new space to call "home", it is quickly transformed into a home; a private sanctuary she can create and make her own and be her self. Once this occurs it seems that roots of stability began to appear in her art work.
- *Social strangeness.* Culturally she found herself being different those around her in Vancouver. And very importantly, she found her perspective of femininity and womanhood very different in comparison to her native Australia.
- *Collisions.* Between her notion of femininity and women in Canada, between her sense of self and her new work world, between her brothers in Australia and her living in Canada - and of simply colliding with different energy levels.
- *Two body images.* In the initial painting Zinnia appears as though free-floating touching neither Australia nor Canada as though flying on a trapeze waitingfor someone to catch her. In the first painting the colours are quite vibrant and energetic, whereas in the second painting at the end, the colours have become muted, soften.
- *Pivotal painting* was the Burning Bush Fires of Australia - the idea of destroying the old to make room for the new was most powerful for her.

Sunflower *(researcher) is a 38 year old, gay White/Jamaican-Canadian male, in graduate school, of lower economic class than Zinnia or Jasmine. The transition that I was experiencing at the time of this study was beginning a same-sex long term relationship with someone I had recently met 3000 miles in Cape Breton away, via the Internet; without meeting him face to face. He arrived just prior to the study to begin a new life with me. I had moved from Toronto to Vancouver five years earlier.*

- *Red and orange.* Red is considered the symbol of masculinity and life energy. The colour orange prevalent in my paintings is the feminine energy which both my partner and I share. This is the hue of nurturing, gentleness and is seen as a complement to red.
- *Eye, vines, and the extensive use of water as washes.* The symbol of the eye is considered to be that of intellectual perception - where the opening of one's eyes is likened to the opening up of knowledge. The second major theme is the shape of vines and heavy/thick

lines - like vines. This shape remind me of growth. Many of the paintings are filled with "washes", which is the use of water (tears) to thin paints to give the colour a very light hue.

- *Social strangeness.* As our circumstances change we can move from being accepted to that of rejection - simply because the dynamics of meaning attributed to attributes of our selves and our environments has shifted.
- *Two body images.* My initial painting portrayed my body image being hidden from view because of various tensions around me. The initial colours were very neutral and unobtrusive. The later body image is much more vibrant with a very strong body outline evident.
- *Pivotal painting* for me in the series I worked on was the one entitled Home. The concept of home - of being a space or state of mind where one can truly let go and be free from the outside world was a strong one for me.

Implications

When we, as teachers and adult educators work with learners from life worlds and frames of being different from our own. This study highlights that educators should not look at the most obvious sources of where barriers, issues, anxieties may be. We need to look deeper - for Zinnia and Jasmine the issues were not directly ethnicity differences (although indirectly ethnicity does play a role) but the construction of gender across ethnicity and the placement and meaning given to femininity and womanhood in Taiwan and Australia versus Canada which seems to be have a greater need for exploration and education.

Much of this study incorporated "still" art such as the paintings. Further study needs to include how we can use live or "performance" art (both spectator and participatory) as media for communicating and teaching. This study touched on identities primarily of sexuality and ethnicity as they undergo dramatic shifts - further study needs to be done to explore other forms of identity discontinuity, regeneration, or evolution in conjunction with art. Lastly, the environments within which this form of education takes place needs to be explored in order to allow for greatest exploration. This study took place within a non-formal adult education setting - other formats could be the formal, institutional (usually reserved for the medical model of art therapy) and informal community development settings. However, with the advent and competition of technology, the Internet, interactive computer programs, etc. the personal contact of art as medium for teaching has much work ahead of itself.

Summary

The paper describes, briefly in overview form, a Masters study carried out by a gay male graduate student with two recent female immigrants from Taiwan and Australia to explore profound life transitions withing people's lives. Through a sketch of some of the literature relied upon I assemble the frame within which the study begins, evolves, and eventually flourishes. We explore the key themes uncovered by the three participants through the workshops. Lastly, I look at the implications of this study for the process of art as pedagogy, taking the whole learner where they are at the present time in a more accurate manner, and how this process may work for other shifts in life people may experience. I am not suggesting that art as pedagogy is a panacea for every teaching situation - logic has its place. What I am suggesting is placing knowledge constructed from emotion, intuition, creativity, aesthetics, and reflexivity alongside the value of logic - and not in the more traditional discounted location often found within society, particularly the more "polite", an at times, unsafe atmosphere for "social strangers" within many Academic (institutional) environments.

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Informal Learning of Homeless Women: A Feminist Study of Surviving the Everyday

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Abstract: The purpose of this study was to examine how homeless women learned to survive in their daily lives. Their relationships contributed to many years of unsettling experiences and continuous transitional situations. Each woman followed a progression of sophisticated street smarts, but eventually faced a devastating decision which served as the impetus for a learning experience that resulted in an empowering change.

Introduction

Poor women, victims of social and economic oppression, are the most likely individuals to become homeless. By the very nature of this oppression, they must learn to survive in adverse circumstances. Within the social context of homelessness, women in transition must learn to survive each day and hopefully realize a better quality of life in order to move beyond homelessness and poverty. These women are faced with numerous challenges that may warrant the attainment of further knowledge. There are times that stressful situations, such as loss of job, change in familial circumstances, etc. motivates an adult to seek new information.

Homeless women, coping with daily multiple and adverse situations, make decisions based on prior knowledge, obtained in both formal and informal learning environments. Specifically, formal learning environments include public schools, vocational-technical training schools, business schools, and the like. While informal learning environments are not structured and primarily constitute an individual's daily life experiences.

Michael Welton (1995) suggests that all social relations provide the arena for learning to take place and refers to this viewpoint as the social learning paradigm. He suggests that there are three types of institutions that "are the indispensable source from which our character and identity is formed and reformed" (p. 134). They are: family and schools; groups and associations; and cultural groups that promote religion, art, social norms, and the like. Personal identity and behavior patterns are formed through our social learning processes.

Paradigms of Women's Learning

The context of women's learning is patterned by and reflects the multiple roles and tasks performed by women in our society. In turn, their relationships form an intricate web that serves as a foundation for their ongoing learning experiences. Mary Catherine Bateson (1994) reminds us that sometimes we learn by "plan and experience" (p. 42) and at other times we learn by observation. Most importantly each of us learns how to transfer knowledge from one experience to another.

Women's learning may be viewed from two perspectives: the analytical learning paradigm and the relational learning paradigm. In real life, it is difficult to distinguish the characteristics and tendencies inherent to each paradigm. However, for the purposes of this discussion, each learning process will be examined separately.

The analytic learning paradigm investigates the acquisition of knowledge that is gathered through formal institutions. The relevance of including this paradigm stems from a feminist interpretation that knowledge obtained in formal institutional settings reflect the male-dominated norms pervasive in our society. Specifically, this knowledge has been sanctioned by society, and taught in a manner that meets the needs of men and society.

The relational learning paradigm examines knowledge that is acquired from informal sources, particularly life experiences. Of primary interest, is how women utilize what they learn outside of formal institutions, such as schools and community activities.

Research Design

The design of this study was constructed by drawing from the tenets of three forms of research: qualitative research, phenomenological methods and feminist research. Qualitative research is based upon the notion that reality is best understood by examining the social interaction among individuals. The underlying philosophy of phenomenological research methods guides the researcher to examine a specific situation within a particular environment. Feminist research methods (methods that are used by individuals who consider themselves feminists) were used to guide the relationship between the researcher and the participants, the acknowledgment of "voice," and each woman's oral histories.

I conducted three seventy-five minute interviews with each of the four study participants using the phenomenological interviewing approach. These interviews focused on obtaining specific information regarding the critical incidents, or significant events, that each woman had while being homeless. From each woman's collection of stories, I searched for evidence that she had learned some information and how this learning took place using thematic analysis of the transcribed interviews. The transcripts were then examined to identify the emerging themes and categories that were used to formulate the study findings.

Emergent Themes

The experiences of the study participants was grouped into four themes: perception of self, instability of relationships, ineffectual decision making, and resourcefulness.

Perception of Self. The theme of perception of self is broken into three parts. First, I explored how each woman viewed herself. Second, the perception of self includes each participant's perception of how others view her. The third component is how I perceive each woman as she referred to herself in relationships or the comments that she made about herself. These self-identifying perceptions affected how each woman went about making decisions and how this affected her learning outcomes. Sometimes, these perceptions were heavily influenced by parents and other primary relationships in her life. There were other times that each woman's perception of self was based on how she felt dealing with a particular situation in her life. These perceptions were predicated on their initial perceptions of self as a child.

Instability of Relationships. The interviews revealed a pattern, based on interpretation and how I viewed them, that suggested that each woman experienced unstable relationships. The relationships with parents, siblings, children and men that each woman named in her interviews had an influence on the decisions that she made and often affected her learning. Many times a study participant commented that she learned from her mistakes when taking familial relationships into account.

Ineffectual Decision Making. The decisions made by the participants did not always yield the desired outcome. At times some negative outcomes included: instability in a relationship, lack of suitable housing, or little or no economic benefits. How each woman went about making decisions affected the learning processes during their transitional status.

Sometimes it is difficult to discern between the decision making processes and the informal learning processes as they often follow similar or parallel paths. Occasionally, how the study participants made decisions and the learning that took place was often identical.

Each of the women interviewed made decisions in various ways. All of them commented at some point that their decision making strategies evolved from learning by the mistakes that were made through life experiences. It is interesting to point out here that throughout the span of their transitional status, their decision making skills ranged from making impulsive decisions through contemplative thought and planning.

Resourcefulness. The theme of resourcefulness examined the ways in which each woman utilized her understanding of a problem that she had to deal with and how she went about resolving the situation based on her understanding of her needs at that time. This section reflects the crux of this study: how each of these women learned to survive. The ingenuity of each woman ranged from one participant's experiences of living on the streets when she stated: "I was a con artist" and another's experiences of "I was acting," when discussing her flight from an abusive relationship to another woman's belief that you "do what you have to do." Sometimes the study participants acted contrary to acceptable moral behavior by lying, cheating, and stealing. Most often they survived by figuring out who they could trust to assist them during their transition, and more importantly learned to craft conscious resolutions to the dilemmas they were facing.

The term 'street smarts' refers to a compilation of the various ways that each woman went about surviving while in transition, whether it be negotiating to reside with a friend, live on the streets, or seek refuge in a shelter. Acquiring 'street smarts' is a very complicated, intricate process. This process begins as a child when the learning process begins, often very intrinsic at first, or learning by observing one's parents. Formal schooling also plays a part in this as a child, who turns adolescent, negotiates her social relationships in both the public world, and in the private world of home. How an individual feels about herself, or self-esteem, is very important and affects how decisions are engineered. When a girl or woman is abused, whether physically, emotionally, or both, she will make decisions under duress and will often take drastic measures that ordinarily would be of a more calculating nature. As one participant comments "When you're being abused you question everything that you're doing."

Study Conclusions

The informal learning progression of the study participants was affected by many external factors that stemmed from familial and social relationships. The foundation of each participant's social learning began as a child relating with her parents. Overall, her family life did not always provide a nurturing environment to encourage a positive sense of self and as stated in many instances was detrimental. Specifically, each woman lacked positive role models as a child to develop a personal identity that fostered self-esteem. Moreover, her family environment did not provide a positive and stable atmosphere for support in their formal education, or to establish strong and healthy social relationships with their parents.

Each woman, through unforeseen circumstances, was forced to prematurely assume adult roles and responsibilities while still an adolescent. This fact, coupled with a poor foundation for positive learning experiences within the family unit, forced her to persevere throughout periods of transition ill-prepared to meet the challenges that she faced. In this sense, each woman as a young adult did not have the guidance to distinguish between good and bad choices. In essence, each woman did not learn the skills to initiate effective decision making and maintaining a healthy relationship, or possess sufficient education to obtain sustainable employment.

Their informal learning path could be sub-divided into situational and intentional learning. Their situational learning course involved a complex web comprised of learning from mistakes, controlling relationships, crossing moral boundaries, and making spontaneous decisions. When viewing situational learning from a feminist lens, each woman was under the power and influence of controlling relationships with their father, a boyfriend, or a mother or whom she was dependent on at the time. To some extent, their learning was limited within a particular relationship since each woman succumbed to the choices established for her instead of making decisions based on her own choices.

When participants employed intentional learning, the process consisted of planned activities that utilized community resources and services. Therefore, each woman took the initiative to make conscious choices about her learning despite of the desires of someone who had previously dominated her life. Most often when engaged in intentional learning, the participants were making plans or had already left an abusive relationship. Thus, the intentional learning was self-initiated.

Implications for Adult Education Theory and Practice

From this study, I discovered that the learning of these women is greatly affected by their relationships and that often these relationships provide intrinsic and extrinsic motivating factors for a positive or negative learning experience. I also learned that their dominant relationships influences their social ability for positive informal learning experiences and that this interference affected an awareness of their own personal identity and development as women. While we do not know that their self-esteem was affected by their relationships, we do not know the extent that self-esteem was suppressed by the men in their lives. Nor do we know the extent to which these women believed that they could make a change in their lives because they continued to repeat similar behaviors that were devastating to their lives.

Homeless educators could benefit from incorporating ideas drawn from the theory of perspective transformation, which is defined as "the process of becoming critically aware of how and why our assumptions have come to constrain the way we perceive, understand, and feel about our world" (Mezirow, 1991, p. 167), to enhance the learning strategies of homeless women. Educators of homeless women may consider ways to foster self-efficacy and self-esteem into their daily interactions with the women. Without a strong sense of self and belief that she has control over her thoughts, feelings, and actions, a woman in transition will be more likely to repeat similar behavior that stifles her chances to obtain a stable and independent life. Furthermore, educators of homeless women must remain cognizant of the fact that decision making among homeless women affects their stability and seek ways to encourage homeless women to make decisions that will disrupt their transitional cycle. This may be accomplished by examining the decision-making process of each woman and provide a means that would encourage reflective learning.

Homeless education classes should incorporate ideas to encourage women to engage in critical thinking. It was apparent that these women did not often acquire critical thinking skills through their life experiences. However, these women crafted ways to obtain street smarts and possess the capability to analyze this knowledge in a positive manner. By employing critical thinking, a homeless woman may examine previously held assumptions, attitudes, and behaviors to discern different ways of navigating her life.

Finally, educational programs for homeless women may provide tools that will empower women to initiate conscientious and healthy behavior to obtain stability in their relationships and in other areas of their lives. Specifically, the women must realize that there are practical solutions to their problems and actively seek the tools to achieve a stable life.

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Women and Politics in Paraíba, Brazil: Participation, Learning, and Empowerment

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Abstract: Life histories of pioneer female politicians illustrate instances of learning and empowerment within gender cultures and imbalance in private and public life. After transforming their personal and family lives, independent female candidates face greater obstacles located in the political and economic structure.

Brazilian women conquered the right to vote in 1932. Comprising 51% of the population and 49% of registered voters nowadays, they have attained only 7% of all formal political representation. Nevertheless, in the nineties, women's advancement within party politics has been notable, especially at the municipal level, and surprisingly in the poor Northeast Region. Moreover, in 1997, on the initiative of a female Federal Deputy representing the Workers Party-PT, a quota system (a 25% minimum for either gender within each party or coalition) was turned into law, thus expanding opportunities for women.

Very little is known about Brazilian women's participation in formal politics let alone the personal trajectories and experiential learning of pioneers. There is much to be learned about the structural position of groups, the corporate factors of political participation, the influence of individual life cycles, and how cost-benefit relations operate in the case of women, who face unequal conditions of access to political arenas and power channels in comparison to men, a history of fewer political rights and gains, as well as segmented life cycles due to maternity (Avelar, 1987). It has been noted that female politicians are frequently connected to family-party structures because oligarchies use the "women of the family" to perpetuate their power, especially in the Northeast (Tabak, 1987; Costa, 1998). Moreover, women themselves have used feminine stereotypes in their campaigns – the loving mother, wife, or teacher – suggesting that rhetorical manipulation of the traditional feminine identity might generate political gains (Rabay, 1996). On the other hand, change in traditional feminine roles has allowed for greater individual autonomy and political progressivism among women (Avelar, 1987), pointing at possibilities of redefining the current masculine political culture, reconstructing the political system, as well as recreating social identities (Stromquist, 1998).

Women's formal political participation involves a continual and complex theoretical and practical process of learning about and within relations and practices of power in the realms of public-party politics and private life. Moreover, it involves processes of individual and collective empowerment that are essentially educative. For women empowerment represents a challenge to the current patriarchal ideology, power structures and relations of gender inequality and female subordination. This study explores those processes in and through the life histories of women candidates for the 1998 national and state elections in the state of Paraiba, Brazil, taken from their own narrative and informed by the concepts of oppression, subordination, conscientization, and empowerment as elaborated by Freire (1980) and feminist authors (Leon, 1997; Stromquist, 1998).

The 35 female candidates were classified in 3 groups: heiresses of a family already established in politics; male candidates' helpers without electoral chances themselves; and 'independent' candidates. Independence is practically impossible in politics; furthermore, in poor regions such as the Northeast, electoral success is dependent on economic capital for "buying votes" – those holding positions in the political machine not only exchange favors (social assistance and public jobs) for political loyalty but buy last minute adherence of poor voters through the distribution of material goods. However, the so-called independent candidates have at least one of the following disadvantageous traits: they do not belong to a politically powerful family; they have developed their own practice of political militancy in social movements, grassroots organizations, professional associations, unions, or through the media; they are in small opposition parties or they have fought their way into a traditional party; they have a professional identity; they personify moral autonomy. In effect, only one of them was elected whereas, in contrast, six relatives of male politicians conquered seats in the State Assembly.

How do women understand and experience politics and power as they begin to reverse their historical exclusion? To what extent and in what forms have they struggled against the patriarchal order during their life courses? What are their motives for entering formal politics? What singular forms, as yet unknown, might their participation in politics reveal? What obstacles have they confronted and which strategies and resources have they used? In what sense are they supported or unsupported by traditional male dominated political parties and interest groups, or by other women? What individual and gender gains do they perceive? In what ways do public visibility and political commitments affect their private life? To what extent do they represent feminist interests? To what extent is experiential learning more important than formal education? These questions guided the inquiry and helped to put in context the conversations with the candidates.

Twelve women with significant electoral performance, both elected and non-elected, were interviewed on their family history and current situation; formal and informal education, including prior political activism, experiences within parties, elections, and official posts, stressing personal motivation, learning within and about politics, and commitment to gender issues. From the tape-recorded interviews, life histories were written and then discussed with and validated by the subjects, who discarded anonymity. This paper explores the life histories of the five 'independent' candidates.

The independent female politicians

Aracilba Rocha, 46 years old, is a very assertive and witty civil engineer, a widow and mother of a 25 year old son and an 18 year old daughter. A longstanding member of PMDB, the only opposition party during the military dictatorship in the center-left nowadays, she now ran for the first time for the Federal Chamber and obtained insufficient 9.251 votes.

Coming to the capital from a small rural town when she was ten, *Aracilba* was found illiterate and helped by her third grade teacher. The youngest of nine children, her father was a tailor, but her mother was the one who supported them by sewing the shirts he cut during all her waking hours. Strong and distant, the mother let the children free, and *Aracilba* spent her free time reading in the library, thus developing her writing skills. Soon she started a full time job and transferred to night school. Spontaneous and self-confident she approached the male revolutionary students of the late sixties and wrote their pamphlets, hence meeting her husband-to-be. As the student association president, though not moved by ideology, she joined the secondary student movement and was even arrested at sixteen. Because she was a show-off, but poor and unattractive, she had to know things; when she arrived home from school at 11, she lit two candles (to save electricity) and studied the next day's topics. Successful in Math, she made money by teaching other students on weekends. Following an older brother, she entered the public (free) university to study Engineering, by then already married and pregnant. Her husband died in a car accident after her daughter was born. To survive the pain, she moved to São Paulo, where she entered the state civil service, joined PMDB, quickly becoming her neighborhood board president, and worked hard in two electoral campaigns. In seven years, she built prestige, advanced professionally, expanded her political network and worked out her transference to a position in her home state government in 1987. After 18 years serving PMDB, working to elect others in exchange for her jobs, surviving political instabilities due to her technical competence, postponing her aspirations to run in 1994 and 1996, she finally set out as a candidate. She presented herself as a competent candidate – just as any man and superior to most – to represent people's interests. Asserting that she never found obstacles as a woman, she recognizes no man would have waited so long; yet she does not feel used by the party because she knows money and powerful allies are vital to be elected.

Cozete Barbosa, 42 years old, divorced, two late-teen-age sons, is a system analyst, a member of PT, the biggest left-wing party, and a Councilor of Campina Grande, the second biggest city in the state. She ran for the Senate against two traditional male politicians and, though not elected, received 216.006 votes (19,75% of the total).

Growing up in an upper-middle-class family, attending a catholic female school, *Cozete* was oppressed and repressed as a child by an authoritarian mother, who nevertheless was a model of an independent woman in her time. School offered the chance to break with family restraints by participating in sports and theater, and representing the student association. Soon she became a political militant against the military dictatorship, first in the university student movement, and later, upon taking her first job, in the movement for the reorganization of the local Public Servants Association, becoming their fist president and leading their first strike. She also joined a feminist group, presided the local Human Rights Committee, and got involved with the Landless Movement. Her political militancy paralleled the construction of PT, which she has represented in four elections since 1988. Becoming a leader was a very difficult and painful process for her. Her aggressiveness shocked the town as she confronted the police in the streets. She suffered anonymous threats and sabotages, as well as media attacks on her private life and femininity. Her parents, husband and in-laws did not accept her political militancy and her persistence implied emotional attrition and a divorce. She reports having felt more violated at home than on the streets, but the struggles in the public sphere made her stronger in the private. She has a good relationship with her sons, however, who are very supportive of her political career. She feels frequently constrained by her male colleagues, both as a party member and a representative in the City Council: as she says, PT is patriarchal, the left is patriarchal, and society is patriarchal. As a declared feminist she is in favor of the legalization of abortion and the civil union of homosexuals, contradicting the party's catholic supporters, and says that her commitment is first of all to herself. Albeit stressed, and not so much moved by passion as in the past, she recognizes her contribution to changing the local political culture.

Nadja Palitot, 41 years old, three daughters, one grandson, divorced and re-married, is a criminal lawyer. Affiliated to left-wing parties, she was a Councilor in João Pessoa, the State capital and largest city, from 1992 to 1996, ran for the Federal Chamber in 1994 and for Mayor in 1996. She almost reached the State Assembly with 9.119 votes.

The third among an older brother and two sisters, *Nadja* acquired her social sensibility from her father, a physician who assisted the poor, and her mother, a housewife who taught their illiterate domestic servants at night. Married at sixteen, she studied Law and Journalism and, while bearing her three daughters, remained distant from student politics. She thought she disliked politics and was fond of anarchist literature. Her concern for social justice grew when she visited prisons as part of her coursework. As a criminal lawyer, she joined the Human Rights Committee of the local Lawyers' Guild. Due to a job in the state bank, she got involved with the union movement against lay-offs during a process that resulted in its bankruptcy. By then her leadership and eloquent rhetoric were evident and invitations to join party-politics appeared. Reluctantly, she followed a veteran female politician in her visits to poor neighborhoods and fell in love with the work. In 1992 she joined PDT and ran for the City Council, with little money and help. She did not win a seat with 1.150 votes but, as a proxy, substituted a party member who renounced early in the term. Running for the Federal Chamber in 1994 she received 17.000 votes, no sufficient to win but important for her prestige. However, she felt unsupported by PDT and joined PSB. Her most dramatic experience, seen both as empowering and disappointing was her successful but dreadful fight against a project to increase the Councilors' stipends. All her colleagues, even those on the Left, threatened to impeach her. Though saved by a spontaneous mass movement and later winning the case, she almost gave up politics. In the 1996 Mayor run, she saw her second position drop to fourth because she was considered too aggressive with the main candidate, a supposedly more competent male, who had financial and political support. She says politics is a machist camp and believes that women have a better chance to enact their ideas when they whisper them into male ears who, then, voice them as their own.

Narriman Xavier, 33 years old, divorced, three children from multiple relationships, is a popular radio anchor. Councilor of Guarabira from 1992 to 1996, she was re-elected in 1996 but could not occupy the chair due to a criminal process resulting from political persecution. Declared elected for the State Assembly with 12.292 votes, she then lost her position as the result of a re-count, remaining as a substitute. Though she is now in a center-right party (PFL), she declares that she has no commitment to parties.

Narriman was born in Campina Grande because the town where her family lived had no hospital. The eldest, followed by two brothers, her father was a Census collector and her mother a housewife. At twelve she moved to Guarabira, a small town, and later to her grandmother's house in the capital, where she attended a private school with a scholarship. She returned to Guarabira to study Languages at a community college. Encouraged by a colleague to do a test for a radio job, she crossed the first gender barrier by showing that she could act as a creative reporter. But she aroused the envy of her colleagues and their wives and soon lost her job. Meanwhile she got married, had a son, got divorced, finished college, and lost her father and brother. Returning to the radio, she started a successful career as anchor of a Monday through Saturday, three-hour variety-interactive program, in which she exercises human rights militancy. Her witty and humorous style in addressing the needs of the poor mass rendered a 95% audience rate. In 1992, stimulated by fans, she ran for the City Council and was the champion with one thousand votes thanks to her courage and voice. Extremely independent, during her first mandate she felt not only isolated in opposing and denouncing wrongs, but also gained enemies. Being the only opponent to the town's political patron (himself a State Representative, his wife the town Mayor) she got a community service sentence for disobedience to a court order (delayed the prompt delivery of radio tapes) and, though re-elected, could not assume her second mandate. In the 1998 campaign she suffered heavy attacks on her private life, targeting even her children. Despite all, she finds beauty and strength in the struggle and won't give it up, for she believes in its need, its justice and its possibility of success. Back at school to study Law, she defends individual freedom and feminist causes, such as women's control of their bodies and abortion choice.

Socorro Marques, a 64 years old economist and mother of eight, was one of the first women mayors in the state. Starting her political career in 1982, she practically built the small village of Desterro de Malta into the 3.000 inhabitant town of Vista Serrana, and established her descendents in power. In 1998 she was elected to the State Assembly on a (center-left) PSDB ticket with 13.932 votes.

Socorro was born in a farm, the second child among sixteen. Her mother was the daughter of the founder of the village of Desterro de Malta, and very early she became acquainted with local power and politics. At eighteen she got married and moved to the nearby town of São Bento, where she taught there with a primary education certificate. Later, when she had seven of her children, she moved to Pombal, and attended a night high school where she got an accounting certificate. She went on to college to study Economics, first in the city of Patos and later in the capital, "gently" pressing her husband to move the family in pursuit of her education. There she headed an accounting office, taught, and took care of her home and eight children. Pursuing a career as an economist in the state government, she ended up as sub-coordinator of the State Development Fund, acquiring more knowledge and influence. In that position she was invited to become the Mayor of her home village, a "dry pasture," with the smallest budget in the country. Sorry for its people and conscious that no one else would do it, she confronted her husband, left her comfortable position in the capital and returned home to accomplish her mother's dream. When she assumed office, she heard from her male relatives: "If the men here did not make anything of this town, what will a women accomplish?" She answered: "You wait and see." In sixteen years, twice as mayor, and through her young relatives acting as surrogates, she built the infrastructure, education and health systems, established a textile industry, a commercial network with the South, and even changed the name of the town. In this way, making her work heard in the surrounding towns, she prepared her path to the State Assembly.

Motivation, preparation and access to politics

For all these women, apparently less in the case of Aracilba, motivation for and persistence in politics originate from feelings for the socially excluded and oppressed. Their preparation and access came through formal education and professionalization, i.e., the conquest of technical competence and social recognition, i.e., symbolic capital. But the role of informal education and experiential learning, albeit difficult to estimate, was paramount. Opportunities to develop public speaking, leadership and constituency representation came early through school for Aracilba and Cozete, later through professional practice for Nadja (as a lawyer), Narriman (as a radio anchor), and Cozete (as an union president), whereas for Socorro they came in childhood amid her family culture. In Aracilba's case, serving the party was crucial preparation; grassroots and party organization was part of Cozete's history and identity; however party militancy is not enough to gain its support for electoral positions and campaigns. For all these women, in sum, access has been preceded by a long, difficult, doubtful and uncertain way.

Resources, strategies, learning and empowerment

Totally lacking economic capital, mostly lacking party support, partly lacking symbolic capital (a family name, gender recognition), and in some cases (Cozete, Socorro) lacking family support, these women had to develop extraordinary strength, self-sufficiency, and skills. Educational qualifications, rhetoric and social capital are helpful resources. Sometimes taking the soft but astute stance (Socorro), pragmatic (Aracilba), constantly aggressive and confrontational (Cozete, Narriman), or alternating (Nadja), they use diverse strategies to either to push forward or create their space. They learn that politics is tough, competitive, frustrating, but also stimulating, gratifying, and above all necessary, and that it involves high personal costs (Cozete, Narriman, Nadja). Because the struggle is incessant, empowerment is mostly an unconscious process – "all of a sudden" they find themselves fighting or leading... In this way, doing politics comes as an inescapable consequence, and changing their personal lives follows. Yet, for middle class urban women both empowerment and defeats seem more painful for they experienced more family repression (Cozete) or are more concerned with their public image (Nadja).

Identity and commitment

While all of the five women married and mothered their children (though Narriman counts on her mother's help), only the oldest (Socorro) remains married (though her husband is very ill). Family obligations were not a hindrance for them. They are aware of their personal gains and social contribution both as individuals and gender as they build their multiple identities and diverse political trajectories. While Cozete and Narriman adopt a feminist discourse and practice, Nadja and Socorro are frankly moderate and conciliatory, and Aracilba ignores gender as an issue. Social class and urban versus rural origin (more than age) are differential factors in this respect. Cozete is the only one who joined a feminist group, but Aracilba and Narriman do not submit to traditional sexual morality. Aracilba declares her commitment to the state and the party, Socorro to her town and region, Nadja to human rights and public ethics, Narriman to justice and liberation, and Cozete to the party, the excluded and the oppressed, among which explicitly women.

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Themes of Adult Learning and Development in Human Resource Development

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Abstract: This hermeneutic study explores the practices and philosophies of Adult Education and Human Resource Development, so that integrated communities of practice maybe created by understanding the ways in which adult education theory informs the field of HRD.

According to Dirkx (1996), Human Resource Development specialists hold various perceptions of their field as a form of adult education, some seeing it as interchangeable and others arguing its distinctiveness. There continues to be a wide gap separating learning theory and common training practice (Stamps, 1997), regardless of the widespread acknowledgment that learning is at the center of all adult education and training (Tuijnman, 1996). Perpetuating the gap is the argument, based on the bottom-line focus of Human Resource Development (HRD), that the purpose of HRD is improved performance (Swanson & Arnold, 1996). In contrast, Adult Education (AdEd) embraces the goal of bringing about learning, whether for the benefit of the organization or not. The historical meaning of adult education was to help fully realize a democratic vision in society (Dirkx, 1996), a purpose that potentially could be interpreted as incompatible with the focus of workplace learning.

The gap that apparently exists can be summarized as follows: If workplace learning were considered HRD, then the purpose of training and organization development would be improved performance, and the focus would be on fulfilling the organization's needs; if workplace learning were considered adult education, then the purpose of training and organization development would be learning, and the focus would be on the individual. If the fields of AdEd and HRD, while recognizing their differing needs, focus on their similarities, an opportunity exists to forge an alliance, the potential result of which is a synergy that integrates the theories and practices of the two fields for the benefit of both the individual *and* the organization (Peterson & Provo, 1996).

> The emerging paradigm reveals a view of work that is developmental, participatory, and self-authorizing, if not democratic. Considerable emphasis is placed on contextual or situational learning, in which worker-learners are collaboratively engaged in both problem-posing and problem-solving ... When HRD is framed within the context of the emerging paradigm of work and as a form of adult education, it will then see itself as being about the business of fostering learning environments in the workplace. (Dirkx, 1996, pp. 44, 46)

Maki (1996) referred to the need to develop a citizenry of the workplace. According to Stamps (1997), *communities of practice* a term, he notes, that was coined by Ettienne Wenger and Jean Lave in their 1991 book, Situated Learning (Cambridge University Press) are possible when work and learning are integrated. The core principles of the communities of practice perspective are that (a) learning is social, and (b) learning happens on the job. Thus it is learning that gives rise to communities of practice, which are a way of thinking about how work gets done.

The purpose of this hermeneutic study was to explore the potential for the two fields of Adult Education and Human Resource Development to come together for the benefit both of the organization, whose primary need must focus on performance, and of the individual, whose primary need focuses on personal development. Thus the specific research questions were as follows: (1) What is the practice of Human Resource Development (HRD)? Of Adult Education (AdEd)? (2) How do the fields of AdEd and HRD relate to one another?, and (3) Is there an opportunity for creating integrated communities of practice?

Background

According to de Moura Castro and de Oliveira (1996), even though education and training have been considered polar extremes--education focusing on the development of the mind and training focusing on the mastery of manual endeavors--good training can include conceptual development and education is more meaningful when it is contexualized in some practical activity. Instead of competing, the two fields (occupational training and conceptual development) should help each other in the process of learning because theory and practice are not the extremes of the same continuum. Training should not be considered lacking in theory and conceptualization and education should not be considered impractical (de Moura Castro & de Oliveira, 1996).

Human Resource Development and Adult Education Defined. As with any field, multiple definitions and descriptions of HRD have evolved. HRD has been described as organized learning experiences provided by employers within a specified period of time to bring about performance improvement or personal growth (Nadler & Nadler, 1989); as the field of study and practice responsible for fostering a long term work-related learning capacity at the individual, group, and organizational levels (Watkins, 1995); and as the improvement of individual, group, and organizational effectiveness through the integrated use of career development, organizational development, and training and development (McLagan, 1993).

Definitions of Adult Education also have evolved over time. Lindeman (1926) perceived the education of adults in relation to society, suggesting that the purpose of adult education is bilateral-- changing individuals to adjust to changing social functions because changed individuals have a collective effect in changing society (Lindeman, 1926). A frequently cited definition describes adult education as a process whereby persons whose major social roles are characteristic of adult status undertake systematic and sustained learning activities for the purpose of bringing about changes in knowledge, attitudes, values, or skills (Darkenwald & Merriam, 1982). Such a definition could hold up within the context of HRD. Nevertheless, it is not surprising that to some extent, the definitions of the two fields reflect the various philosophies associated with each.

Philosophies of Human Resource Development and Adult Education. Behaviorist conceptions of learning have been predominant in training. A behaviorist perspective ties observable behavior to an environmental stimulus using reinforcement as the main paradigm, such that learning requires the sequential mastery of behavioral elements (Lowyck, 1996). The behaviorist approach to learning is reflected in HRD settings when actions are rewarded based on measurable behavior (e.g., performance) more predominantly than in adult education settings, in which cognitive growth is more likely to be the framework for learning.

The focus of a cognitive orientation is the internal mental process within the learner's control, which is enhanced when related to concepts which already exist in the individual's cognitive structure (Merriam & Caffarella, 1999). Cognitivism is shaped by three underlying assumptions about the process of learning: (a) individuals construct their own learning from an experience, (b) cognitive meaning develops as individuals interact with their environment, and (c) prior experiences direct perception and thus might limit learning (Grippin & Peters, 1984).

Humanist theories consider learning from the perspective of the human potential for growth. According to Merriam and Caffarella (1991), a humanist orientation would reject the notion that behavior is predetermined either by the environment or one's internal subconscious. Humanism suggests that while individual's perceptions are centered in experience, individuals have freedom to pursue their unlimited potential for growth and development.

Human Resource Development and Adult Education as Integrated Fields. There exists a blurring of boundaries between the field of adult education and other fields (Merriam & Brockett, 1997). While some would claim that aligning with other fields will contribute to a loss of identity for adult education, others would suggest that to do so is to capitalize on the logical link between adult education and other fields. According to Willis (1996), adult education theory and practice have emerged as necessities in order to understand and practice HRD. While adult education and business and industry may have differing goals, they share a common objective--learning for a productive and informed citizenry, whether a citizenry of the community or citizenry within the context of the workplace (Maki, 1996). Even Swanson (1996) suggests that perhaps the two sides have more in common than was first thought--that they may, indeed, not be in conflict. Those who adhere to a performance orientation do so not in an attempt to deny the dignity and worth of employees or to deny that learning is a necessary component of performance; but rather that it is simply to ensure that the HRD process contributes to the organizational goals of the system within which it operates (Swanson & Arnold, 1996).

A collaborative relationship between individual learning and organizational performance may not be quite so *simply* achieved. Certainly, there are opportunities for building a collaborative environment in the workplace through incorporating adult learning strategies, but for adults to be successful in this process, they must be involved in the development of their learning plans and the evaluation of their performance (Quinn, 1996).

According to Lowyck (1996), organizations need to move toward cognitive-oriented training approaches. Cognitive-oriented training approaches would focus on the complex and continuous interaction between learning characteristics (prior knowledge and cognitive and meta-cognitive strategies), complex tasks, the learning environment, and assessment of learning outcomes in terms of learner control, meta-cognitive activity, and transfer. Such an approach could be interpreted as humanistic.

Need for the Study. In the past, workplace learning was primarily skills training that was based on immediate job needs; in the future, it will be integrally tied to performance and production (Watkins, 1995). Thus a more strategic view of workplace learning goes beyond skill-based performance that can be directly and immediately evaluated (a behavioral approach) to include learning (a cognitive approach). Spikes (1995a) suggests just such an integrated approach, emphasizing on-going, integrated learning over the life span of the employee--a combination of training and lifelong professional development.

Influenced by multiple and rapid change in technological, social, political, ethical, demographic, cultural, and ecological arenas, industry evolutions require high-level behaviors among individuals and groups. These behaviors, in turn, require more training and organizational strategies focused on optimal learning output (Lowyck, 1996). This complex environment suggests the need for a collaborative training-learning model, one which can be initiated when the two fields of adult education and human resource development understand the intricacies, goals, and needs of one another--when the two fields unite in humanism.

Methodology: Hermeneutics

The primary task of hermeneutics is to interpret meaning in human experience by conversing with texts or with others in a verbal exchange for the purpose of gaining insight or understanding; in short, hermeneutics makes sense out of everyday action. Understanding allows for new meanings to be recognized, valued, and integrated into life. Meaning can be derived from understanding how values, ideals, concepts, or events relate to each other, the self, and a larger whole. Whenever a question about meaning arises, there is a hermeneutic problem. Hermeneutic research is guided by an interest in understanding what shapes our lives (Hultgren, 1989).

In hermeneutics, the "conversation" should continue until an interpretation is found to be meaningful and misunderstandings have been uncovered and dealt with. Since subjectivity is important and must not be denied, there must be an attitude of openness to what others have to offer (Gadamer, 1975).

The challenge faced by the interpreter is not knowing all the meanings embedded in a text or conversation, so the questions become refined and lead to many affirmations, denials, and raising other related questions in order to raise consciousness and affirm or alter meaning. Thus the interpreter has to reconstruct meanings of texts in order to project answers to the questions posed. But there is no absolute answer. Asking important questions is the first step in hermeneutics.

Success of a hermeneutic study is a matter of the degree of completeness and sense of satisfaction that a meaning has been developed and refined. Readers must assess the quality of insights into meanings. Questions a reader might ask include whether or not the insights have any value to practice, whether the meanings seem forthright and sincere rather than rhetorical and pedantic, and whether the work stimulates further questions and conversation. However, the reader must keep in mind that in hermeneutic studies interpretations cannot be proven.

Since the goal of this study was greater understanding of the meaning behind the conceptual relationship between adult education and human resource development, the research was hermeneutic. It was the "interpretive study of the expressions and objectification (texts) of lived experience in the attempt to determine the meaning of them" (van Manen, 1990, p. 38).

The text used for interpretation in this study consisted of 109 cases--interviews conducted by students taking a graduate-level class surveying the fields of human resource development and adult education at the University of Minnesota, a midwestern, research-oriented, doctoral-granting public institution. During Winter, 1996; Spring, 1996; and Fall, 1997, students interviewed practitioners in the fields of adult education and human resource development for the purpose of comparing and contrasting the two fields. Most of the 109 cases comprised one interview with an HRD practitioner and one interview with an Adult Education practitioner, but one case comprised 4 interviews. The total number of interviews was 220. The majority of *interviewees* were female, perhaps a reflection that the majority of *interviewers* were also female, representative of the gender breakdown in the classroom and the program.

Results and Discussion

The overall theme that emerged is that the focus of HRD and Adult Education falls somewhere on a continuum between learner-centered development and organizational improvement. In fact, when the fields were contrasted, they were contrasted based on those orientations. While organizational philosophies and individual philosophies appear to drive existing practice, the interviews also revealed that practitioners envisioned and sought opportunities to create integrated communities of practice that represented a humanist point of view.

The focus of HRD practitioners was optimization of organizational bottom-line goals. This focus seemed to reflect a behaviorist philosophy and was represented by statements such as the following:

- "The HRD initiatives tend to focus on skills or information needed to perform a particular job."
- "HRD focuses on training to increase production, and thus, company profits."

Adult Education practitioners focused on the goal of individual development. This focus appeared to be most consistent with a cognitive philosophy and was represented by statements such as the following:

- " [The] mission is to teach students how to learn by developing critical thinking skills and a natural curiosity of the world."
- In reference to a GED program: "[The program] provided skill-building around higher critical thinking and even worked to engage the learners in attempts to confront the systems not working in their interests."

Some interviewers chose to emphasize the distinction between the two fields, as represented by the following statements:

- "The distinction lies between the individual compared to the group, gains in self-development compared to gains in corporate efficiency and productivity."
- "It seems as if Human Resource Development offers training for the benefit of the organization, while other adult educators outside of the business world offer education for the benefit of the person."

It is the juxtapositional and transpositional relationship summarized by the following statements that form the basis for suggesting that opportunities do indeed exist to forge integrated communities of practice for the improvement of the human condition:

- "Both [fields] suggest there is an on-going undercurrent toward continual development—AdEd in terms of life-long learning, and HR in terms of managing on-going change in the business environment."
- "Adult education and human resource training and development are very similar. They are based on a common goal of improving the quality of life for an individual."
- "Learning enhances the quality of the individual's life by improving his or her job readiness and security, while at the same time serving the wider society by adding to the pool of skilled workers."
- "Any enrichment by the adult will benefit the organization and the more empowerment bestowed on the learner, the greater benefit will be to the organization *and* [italics added] the adult learner."

Some goals articulated blended philosophy, more Humanistic in nature. This blended approach, which also lends support for the potential to develop communities of practice, was represented by statements such as the following:

- "The more the individual is viewed as a member of the larger community, the more the personal needs of the individual appear to be addressed."
- "Ad Ed has a broader scope with its goal of education for the progress of the whole person, looking at what the learner needs to perform in society as a whole as well as in the work world."
- "In both organizations, the learner is seen as an individual embedded in the larger society."
- "What is interesting is that educational institutions are being challenged to become more productive and to prove or justify themselves, while corporations are discovering that skills like creativity, communication, and psychology are increasingly important in the workplace."

Conclusions and Recommendations

We conclude that a false dichotomy has been created between HRD and AdEd, between the organization and the individual, and between performance and learning. While AdEd and HRD may have different goals, they share a common objective--learning for a productive citizenry. The two fields have complementary theories and practices that benefit both the individual and the organization. If learning is at the heart of HRD and organizational change (Willis,1996), then the contributions of adult education theory must be embraced.

As women, people of color, non-native English speakers, older workers, and members of multiple generations comprise the workplace, complementary and reinforcing work and human resource practices are needed. In the past, workplace learning consisted primarily of skills training based on immediate job needs; in the future, it will focus on fostering long-term, work-related learning capacities (Watkins, 1995). Thus a more strategic view of workplace learning goes beyond skill-based performance that can be directly and immediately evaluated (a behavioral approach) to include learning (a cognitive approach) toward the strategic alignment of goals. Spikes (1995a) suggests just such an integrated approach, emphasizing on-going, integrated learning over the life span of the employee-- a combination of training and lifelong professional development. This complex environment suggests the need for a collaborative training-learning model, one which can be initiated when both fields understand the intricacies, goals, and needs of one another—one in which the fields unite in integrated communities of practice.

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The Role of Adult Education
and English Language Education in Nation-Building:
A Case Study of the Emmanuel Bible Institute of Oradea, Romania

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Abstract: English as a language of theological instruction necessarily includes influential elements of Western Protestant styles of critical thinking. This study focuses on the role and implications of English as a foreign language at the Emmanuel Bible Institute in Oradea, Romania. The influence of English in theological development and subsequent nation building are also addressed.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the role of adult education and English language education in the development of Protestant theological education in one institution, the Emmanuel Bible Institute of Oradea, Romania. This study also examined the larger question of how adult education can effectively work to transform a society in the process of social and political change.

The countries of the former Soviet bloc in Eastern Europe provide contemporary contexts for the study of adult religious education's relationship to nation-building. Romania represents a most interesting context for this study given the events of the past decade. For 50 years, a particularly repressive Communist government ruled Romania. In spite of the government's ban on religious training, one of the first educational institutions to be organized after the 1989 revolution was a Protestant college and seminary, the Emmanuel Bible Institute of Oradea, Romania. What made this institution significant in the eyes of the researchers was its role in the development of an emerging democracy, and its voluntary dependence on curricular materials available primarily in English.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study reflects the blending of three major literature bases: 1)the adult education literature as it is reflected in the more individualistic notions of Knowles' (1980) concepts of andragogy and Mezirow's (1981) concept of perspective transformation, and Freire's (1970) more community-oriented notion of consciousness-raising and empowerment; 2)curriculum development literature as it is reflected in the works of Nunan (1988) who examines curriculum "in action;" and 3)the literature of English for specific purposes (ESP) as it is manifested in the teaching of theology and religious education in developing democracies.

Adult education literature. Knowles' (1980) well-known concept of andragogy, which focuses on the individual learner, is applicable to adult higher education and adult religious education in both formal and nonformal contexts. Knowles' understanding of adult learning theory and the nature of the learner offers broad guidelines for programs transitioning from teacher-directed to learner-focused program planning. This case study provides an opportunity to observe this transition in a cross-cultural context.

In addition, Mezirow's (1981) perspective transformation theory also provides focus on the individual learner who is encouraged to think critically about their own beliefs and about the implications for that individual's surrounding context. The argument is made that learners in the institution of this study are encouraged to think critically, to question, to reflect on practice, and to evaluate what they hear and see in the classroom with what they hear and see in the community. This approach tends to contradict the traditional paradigm of passive/non-critical thinker/responder which was promoted in the general education system under Communism. The role of English is also central in this discussion as it is the language most closely related to modern Western Protestant theology.

Weber (1930/1992) suggested that critical thinking resulted from the Reformation—rationalism and activism being part of Reformation theology. In light of the dominant Orthodox tradition in Romania, which represents a view of compliance, community, and tradition, this pragmatic/critical thinking paradigm creates a tension between traditional Eastern thought and rationalistic Western thought. Western approaches of this nature are coming from the administration and faculty of the institution, who are receiving doctoral degrees in English-speaking institutions in the West, as well as from Western guest-teachers.

Freire's (1970) community-oriented concept of conscientization admonishes the individual learner to move beyond personal realities and develop a consciousness which nurtures a vision for the broader context. Gilberg (1990) identifies this consciousness awareness as the most important issue facing the development of a democratic Romania.

Freire's related concept of praxis also finds a role in this discussion. He maintains that conscientization is only relevant when action is based on critical reflection. The implications for nation-building may seem obvious. As adult learners look critically at their own social situation, they are enabled to take action based on that reflection. However, action without reflection degenerates into mindless activism while reflection without action becomes verbalism (Freire, 1970). The difficult economic situation facing Romania may encourage some toward activism, while those committed to tradition and passivity may motivate others toward verbalism. Balance in the process may be difficult to maintain, but if critical thinking and democracy are to grow and flourish, balance must be maintained. This balance must be defined by the Romanians themselves.

Curriculum. Nunan (1988), who examines curriculum-in-action, offers a model which encourages critical reflection on the part of administrators and faculty who make curricular decisions. Through Freire's processes outlined above, critical reflection can be brought to bear on both the theoretical and applied aspects of curriculum at EBI. Through ethnographic observation and interdepartmental interaction, better decisions can be made concerning course design and practical application of learning.

English Language Education. In regard to English as a foreign language, Hutchinson and Waters' (1987) learning-centered model can also contribute to the process of curriculum development. The input of learners' needs and uses of language for academic success can promote a more integrated approach to teaching English, both for classroom participation and self-directed projects.

International ESL case studies, such as Baciu's (1998) study on teacher education needs in Romania, describe collaborative projects between East and West. Such partnerships illustrate important principles concerning constructive assistance from Western sources. In particular, traditional approaches to English education are transitioning to more humanistic modes, where administrators and teachers are developing learner-oriented approaches to course design.

Research Design

There are two research questions which drove this study. The first question explores the various ways Emmanuel Bible Institute contributes to the rebuilding of Romanian society in the post-Communist era. The second question seeks to uncover the practical implications that require the use of English in the study of theology in a non-English speaking society. In addition, the opinions and attitudes of the people (administrators, faculty and students of the Institute) affected by the English language requirement are addressed.

The research design for this study required a methodology that is both comprehensive and descriptive. Within these parameters, the qualitative case study as described by Merriam (1998) was considered appropriate. Among the numerous variations of case study methodologies, the ethnographic case study was chosen as a primary method for this study. An important element of this approach is the inclusion of cultural and historical perspectives which were used to assist in interpreting the Romanian context.

Empirical data from this study were gathered using multiple data collection techniques in two locations, Oradea, Romania, and Wheaton, Illinois. These data were found in such sources as 1)documents; 2)class observations; 3)questionnaires; 4)audio-taped interviews with subjects from the faculty administration and student body of the Institute; and 5)field notes. The data analysis consisted of organizing verbal data, questionnaires, observations, documents, and field notes into categories and themes that reflect the research questions.

Results

According to the data, apathy among the masses is deeply entrenched in the Romanian way of life. Foreign domination fostered this apathy while communism (1948-1989) extinguished remnants of civil society that existed between the two World Wars. One subject identified the communist approach as the "rape of the Romanian spirit." Gilberg (1990) reported that by the late 1980s atomization eventually broke down the cohesion in society and nearly destroyed the civic consciousness of the Romanian people. Those who spoke out against the regime's policies were detained, imprisoned, deported, or in some cases killed.

Within one year after the Revolution, however, adult higher education became quickly diversified into public and private systems. Some 66 private institutions emerged beginning in 1990, changing the landscape of adult higher education. The emergence of these private institutions represents a move toward democratic forms of higher education, offering courses in business, modern languages and computer technology, as well as other areas.

The data suggest that perspective transformation has been an aspect of the adult education experience at EBI since 1990. Two significant sources which influence this transformation are identified in the data. These are 1)Romanian professors who have or are being educated in Western theological institutions, and 2)Western educators who guest-teach at EBI. Along with this transformation has also come a growing dependence on the English language for access to the literature base as well as for access to the guest professors, most of whom come from English language backgrounds. A core issue which students contend with is the dependence on English in the curricular materials related to the study of theology and Bible. However, the findings also suggest that the use of English exceeds the boundaries of theological studies to also include accessing the informational network and conversing with outsiders. Subjects also indicate that knowledge of English positively influences the democratic process in Romania by connecting its citizens to individual and institutional partners in the West who aid in the rebuilding of the country—a process that necessarily exposes Romanians to outside ideas, values, and thought patterns. Influences from the West have begun to break down centuries of isolation through the media of television, radio, computer technology, advertising, and foreign guests.

Implications

This research is of value to those with broad interests in adult education throughout post-Communist Eastern Europe, and to those with specific interests in adult religious education among non-English-speaking students. Though limited to one institution, this study provides researchers with a case study of how a society experiences a national transformation, and the role of English in the development of belief structures of individual citizens as well as political structures of the country as a whole. Finally, the developments occurring in Romania suggest the need for further research into the role of adult education and the role of English as a foreign language in the transformation of social, educational, and political structures in other countries experiencing such dramatic change.

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An Analytical Framework for Cross-Cultural Studies of Teaching

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Abstract: Working cross-culturally, whether defined by discipline, institution, community, or nation-state, inherently means working outside the familiar. The aim of this paper is to present an analytical framework through which to explore and understand different conceptions of teaching. The framework consists of three analytical categories: epistemic beliefs, normative expectations, and pedagogical procedures.

Introduction

> *Culture is first and foremost a shared way of making sense of experience, based on a shared history ... Because a new culture takes them outside familiar meaning systems, individuals learning a new culture [or new conceptions] find themselves in situations where familiar ways of interpreting and acting are not reliable, yet others' ways of interpreting and acting are not fully accessible. (Jacobson, p. 16)*

For the past decade, colleagues and I have been studying conceptions of teaching. Working in several countries, we have studied nearly 400 teachers of adults, include teachers of adult basic education, accounting, automotive repair, Chinese classics, computer science, cooking, mathematics, English, pharmacy, physics, psychology, surgery, Tai Chi, and a host of other subjects. (e.g., Cheifitz, Pratt, and Wells, *under review*; Pratt, 1991; 1992; Pratt and Associates, 1998; Pratt, Kelly, and Wong, 1999) Using interviews, surveys, focus groups, and observations we have been trying to identify fundamental structures that might account for different conceptions of teaching across variations in discipline, institution, and culture.

Conceptions are culturally embedded reference points through which we make sense of, and give meaning to, the world around us. They are specific meanings we attach to experience or phenomena which then influences our behaviour. We form conceptions of virtually every aspect of our perceived world and use them to delimit something from, and relate it to, other aspects of our world. In so doing we tend to project our way of understanding, and even our forms of 'logic', into contexts in which those ways of understanding and reasoning may not be appropriate. Although common to many everyday situations, our conceptions are perhaps most 'uncommon' when working in another culture. When we cross cultural, linguistic, or even disciplinary boundaries we run the risk of unwittingly assuming *our* conceptions are *their* conceptions, in which case we often end up seeing others as only a shadow of ourselves.

Although our research teams generally included members of the disciplines and cultures which we were studying, we were faced with a persistent problem: How might we break free from our own conceptions of teaching so as to better understand other conceptions of teaching? How might we avoid the imposition and rationalization of our own cultural, historical, or philosophical biases about teaching? Our search was for variation, not affirmation. How do conceptions of teaching vary and, more importantly, what are the structural properties of that variation?

In order to conduct our studies, across variations that we could only partially understand, we had to first identify that which we believed was essential to all conceptions of teaching. What elements or properties must be present for something to qualify as a conception of teaching? We concluded that any conception of teaching must address at least three constructs and sets of related questions:

- Teaching: What does teaching mean; and what is the social role of a teacher?
- Learning: What does learning mean; and what is the primary role of a learner?
- Knowledge: What is to be learned; how will we know when that has been learned?

Underlying our approach, and the analytical framework that guided our research, was an assumption that conceptions of teaching are both individually and socially constructed. However, we also assumed that social constructions were more potent in this dialectical relationship than were individual constructions. Certainly, individual teachers bring unique personal attributes to their understanding of teaching, both in terms of how they go about teaching and what they believe about learning and knowledge. This is, in part, what makes teaching exciting and rewarding.

Yet, as much as we might want to recognize the power of individual agency and creativity there is a growing body of research that suggests the social is more potent than the individual when it comes to conceptions of teaching. Although there are as many idiosyncratic ways of describing teaching as there are teachers, there is a limited number of *substantively different* ways in which teaching can be understood. This assumption has been supported, both in our research and in a recent review of research on conceptions of teaching in higher education. (Kember, 1997)

Kember's review suggests there are very few significantly different conceptions of teaching, perhaps as few as four or five. While individuals espouse their own conceptions of teaching those beliefs and admonitions are apparently informed by, and are a reflection of larger social, cultural, historical, and/or disciplinary contexts within which people live and work. Indeed, for many teachers the ways in which they think about teaching are written and sanctioned by the social structures within which they live well before they are enacted by the person-as-teacher.

This is not surprising. Within each community of practice there is an accepted identity or social role of 'teacher' that precedes individual constructions, or skillful performances, of teaching. Individuals who wish to practice in those communities go about learning the scripts and roles of teacher in ways that will give them legitimacy and membership within that community. For many teachers, much of what they do is judged on the basis of how well it conforms to particular 'cultures of teaching.' (Hargreaves, 1994) For Hargreaves, teaching cultures are comprised of "beliefs, values, habits, and assumed ways of doing things among communities of teachers who have had to deal with similar demands and constraints over many years" (p. 165). From this point of view, "there is not one global culture of teaching but myriad sub-cultures localized by place, context, subject content, and language." (Pratt and Nesbit, in press, p. 14) To be a 'good teacher' in one culture of teaching is not the same across all cultures of teaching. Thus, we assume conceptions of teaching are constructed, enacted, and judged within specific cultures of teaching, or communities of practice, often without questioning the norms or values of those communities.

Conceptions of teaching are, therefore, a mix of individual perceptions of what is sanctioned by the community as well as what fits one's individual style. Yet, even within this balancing of the personal and communal there is a tendency to regress toward the mean and conform to: **Epistemic Beliefs**, that is, the community's beliefs about the authorized knowledge in a field or discipline; **Normative Expectations**, that is, expected roles and responsibilities for teachers in a community of practice; and **Pedagogical Procedures**, that is, what are considered effective forms of practice.

Our analytical framework focused on the mix of epistemic beliefs, normative expectations, and pedagogical procedures related to the constructs of teaching, learning, and knowledge. We assumed these to be common and necessary to all conceptions of teaching, yet not so binding as to lead us to re-discover variations on our own ways of construing teaching. What follows next is an elaboration on the analytical framework, with examples of findings that differentiate between conceptions of teaching within each analytical category.

An Analytical Framework

Epistemic Beliefs. Epistemic beliefs are related to the nature of what one is teaching, the aims or purposes for education, the nature of learning, and the kinds of evidence that are acceptable when making claims about what people have learned. These beliefs may arise from traditional cultures and/or from one's profession, discipline, or vocation. In terms of the central constructs of teaching, learning, and knowledge, this dimension of teaching addresses such questions as:

- What is considered valid knowledge?
- Who is considered authoritative?
- How does a person gain knowledge?
- Who is the best judge of learning?
- What kind of evidence attests to learning?

Some of the epistemic beliefs arising from our work that differentiate between conceptions of teaching, across variations in culture, discipline, and institutional contexts refer to:

- *Weak/strong categorization of knowledge*
- *Role of basics or foundational knowledge*
- *Locus of responsibility for learning*
- *Type and role of examination and assessment procedures*

Each of these findings, in some way, refers back to the initial constructs of teaching, learning, and knowledge.

Normative Expectations. Normative expectations of teaching refer to one's social identity, position, and duty as teacher. Normative expectations about teaching are learned from living within specific historical, political, cultural, and institutional contexts. As with epistemic beliefs, these expectations are often received and reproduced without challenge or question. Specifically, they inform our understanding of how a particular conception of teaching defines appropriate roles, responsibilities, and relationships.

In terms of the three central constructs of teaching, learning, and knowledge, we were interested in the following: What is expected of the teacher in this setting, with this content, and with these learners? And, what is expected of the learners? Some of the normative issues that arose from our studies include:

- *Nature of a teacher's authority*
- *Duty and responsibility as teacher*
- *Responsibilities inside and outside class*
- *Nature of relationship with students*
- *Moral aspects (heart) of teaching*

Again, these further elaborate the central constructs of teaching, learning, and knowledge and give insight into the next category: pedagogical procedures.

Pedagogical Procedures. Conceptions of teaching also suggest appropriate pedagogical procedures, that is, teaching actions or approaches (the what and how of teaching). Throughout our research, data collection and analysis was guided by asking, "What's going on here?" In each case we assumed that what appears to be happening may be misleading; events that look the same may be interpreted differently, depending on one's point of view. This is particularly important when evaluating teaching. Under the press of evaluation, pedagogical procedures are often judged appropriate only if they are consistent with dominant values and social norms within a profession, discipline, vocation, or society. (Pratt, 1997; Pratt and Johnson, 1997) Thus, within this framework pedagogical procedures are interpreted in terms of the social norms and values that are being enacted.

Again, within our work some of the pedagogical procedures that were related to epistemic and normative dimensions of teaching included:

- *Use of instructional time*
- *Nature of the instructional process*
- *Nature of feedback to students*
- *Ways of adapting to group or individuals*
- *Ways of questioning students*
- *Ways of responding to students*

However, the beliefs and expectations beneath procedures are essential to interpreting the actions above. Consequently, pedagogical procedures are understood to represent only the visible tip of any conception of teaching.

Summary

It would be a mistake to assume we are only talking about studies of teaching which explore cultural differences within or between nation-states. While those are common forms of reference for cross-cultural studies, we think it is useful to remember Hargreaves' admonition that there are many 'cultures of teaching.' They may be defined by disciplinary, professional, or institutional affiliation that represent communities of practice characterized by different beliefs, values, habits, and assumed ways of doing things. As such, we must start with the assumption that other conceptions of teaching are likely to be qualitatively different from our own. If we are to understand substantively different conceptions of teaching we need analytical tools that will allow us to remain open to meaning systems that are strange or even challenging to our own ways of thinking and valuing.

Thus, working cross-culturally, whether defined by discipline, institution, community, or nation-state, inherently means working outside the familiar. The aim of this analytical framework is to provide a rigorous, wide angle lens through which we can embrace and understand conceptions of teaching that lie outside our own meaning systems. Rigor is essential if our work is to be credible in identifying variations in the nature and quality of teaching; equity is important if the framework is to be fair across cultural, disciplinary, and institutional contexts. We have found the framework to be flexible and parsimonious, providing a useful language and set of constructs by which to talk about teaching, whether researching or evaluating it, cross-culturally.

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Perceptions of Nontraditional African American Baccalaureate Nursing Students of Their Persistence in or Departure From An Urban Nursing Program

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Abstract: The literature reflects that although more people of color are enrolling in higher education, graduation rates remain dismal. The purpose of this naturalistic qualitative inquiry was to determine perceptions of experiences of nontraditional African American nursing students regarding their persistence in or departure from a baccalaureate degree nursing program.

Introduction

The United States is quickly becoming the most demographically diverse nation in the world. According to the 1990 census profile from the U.S. Bureau of the Census, population shifts are occurring which are altering the ratio between persons of color and White groups in America. These projections have implications that impact higher education. Although the increase in college participation rates of minority groups is encouraging, many students of color fail to persist to graduation. As noted by Fitzsimons and Kelley (1996, p. 1), "Minority students gain admission and enroll, but are the least successful in graduating." Given that the total percentage of ethnic groups in the United States population continues to grow, nurse educators must meet the responsibility of preparing a culturally competent workforce (AACN, 1993; Buckley, 1980; Fernandez-Santiago, 1994).

Statement of the Problem

When evaluating the data from several studies, Tucker-Allen (1989) noted the existence of several patterns regarding minority students enrolled in schools of nursing. First, minority students are not being admitted to schools of nursing in proportional numbers to the general population. Of those who are admitted, a substantial number fail to enroll in the nursing program. Lastly, of those who do enroll, a significant number fail to graduate. Tucker-Allen (1994) noted that while schools of nursing may be admitting more minority students, the graduation rate for this population has remained flat.

The larger social issue addressed in this study was that African Americans are not proportionately represented in nursing education or the nursing profession. The need exists for African Americans to practice in the profession of nursing in order to meet the health care needs of an increasingly diverse population. The problem addressed in this study examined how experiences influence the perceptions of nontraditional African American baccalaureate nursing students and affect their persistence or departure.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was based on the theories of Tinto (1975, 1993) prominent in the field of higher education; and McClusky (1963) from the field of adult education. Tinto (1993) proposed a complex longitudinal, theoretical model of persistence/departure behavior that results from a process of interaction between the individual and the institution. The student's background and experiences within the institutional environment result in varying levels of academic and social integration. These various levels of integration form the core concept of

Tinto's model that regard both persistence and departure as resulting from the individual student's integration with the social and academic systems of the institution (Tinto, 1975, 1993).

McClusky's (1963) Power/Load/Margin Theory stated that the key factors in an adult's life are the load the individual must carry in the process of living, and the power that is available to the individual to carry the load. Margin is a function of the relationship of load to power (margin equals surplus power).

Methodology

Qualitative naturalistic inquiry was the appropriate methodology for this study in order to illuminate the local social context. Convenience sampling was used to identify participants who were assigned to separate focus groups. One group was composed of participants who were departers due to academic dismissal (departers group, n = 3). The second group was composed of participants who persisted and were either currently enrolled or had graduated (persisters group, n = 4). All participants were female, nontraditional, African American students who were presently or had previously been enrolled in the baccalaureate nursing program. All of the students had matriculated from a co-institutional agreement between two universities. Interview guides were developed and participants were interviewed in a focus group setting, followed by individual interviews. All interviews were recorded and transcribed verbatim and all data were subjected to analytic procedures commonly accepted for use in qualitative methodology.

Findings

Data were analyzed using a process of identifying emerging themes, and developing subcategories and categories. Three overall final categories evolved out of the subcategories.

Educational Climate. The first category was educational climate and included concepts and themes related to the subcategories of atmosphere, oppression, and social integration. The educational climate included the participants' perceptions of both the formal and informal environments of the two campuses (predominantly Black and predominantly White institutions) and the larger picture related to educational opportunities in general.

The institution that the participants had matriculated from was a predominantly Black institution (PBI) and was assigned the pseudonym of Middle College. The receiving institution, a predominantly White institution (PWI), was assigned the pseudonym Urban University. A basic premise of adult education is that returning nontraditional students must feel a certain degree of comfort in order to return and succeed. Although none of the departers group participants stated that the educational climate directly caused their academic dismissal, they all cited numerous examples that could be grouped together under this heading as they related their experiences of what it was like to be an African American student attending a PWI.

The word "atmosphere" seemed to hold a lot of meaning to the participants in the departers group. When comparing the campus climate of Middle College with Urban University, LaVerne stated the following:

> I think me personally, I feel at home there [at Middle]. When I came to [Urban], . . . I felt unwelcome and I felt out of place. . . . and it wasn't really the coursework that bothered me, it was the, it was just the atmosphere. . . . I'm the type of person, that if I don't feel comfortable somewhere then I won't do well there.

Middle College was perceived as supportive by the departers group and participants felt encouraged to succeed, thus increasing their self-esteem. Urban University was found to be more competitive and participants expressed that they felt like there was a weeding out process occurring; one of the participants reported the atmosphere as racist. Examples of oppression were cited by the departers group participants as related to the general educational climate for African Americans.

In the subcategory of social isolation, two of the departers group participants were not actively involved with classroom or campus activities but reported satisfactory interactions with their nursing classmates. One participant was heavily involved, primarily in activities related to the nursing program. While the participants did not express that any one of these specific subcategories or themes that emerged directly caused their academic dismissal, they were identified by them as areas of concern.

Members of the persisters group mentioned the term environment and spent a significant amount of time discussing the concept of prejudice. Eve denied experiencing any problems with prejudice at Urban. However, she had previous experience in higher education at a state PWI where she reported encountering prejudice. She cited one particular example of covert racism as follows: "It was just like a feeling, it's just like when you're trying to, like when you don't want people to know you're prejudiced and you're trying to mask your feelings, but you can tell it's there."

Myth of Homogeneity. The second category is best described by Brown (1994) who used the phrase, the myth of homogeneity, to describe the assumption in American society that what is true for one African American student becomes true for all. Thus, African American students are viewed as a monolithic group, refuting any hope for exhibiting their own unique and individual characteristics. Participants in the departers group recounted numerous instances throughout their educational careers that demonstrated how much these myths continue to be propagated in society today and ultimately erode their ability to succeed. The subcategories of educational preparation and stereotypes were identified based on the concepts and themes that emerged from the data.

Jean, from the departers group mused about educational preparation following a discussion of barriers that African Americans face. "I just wonder if we're prepared the same. You know what I'm saying? I feel that, I don't mean just in college, I mean in grade school, high school, that sort of thing, that progression."

The departers group participants cited several examples of assumptions and stereotypes that they experienced from various sources at the PWI, namely from campus police and their fellow students. All felt that it was assumed by their earlier educational preparation that they would not attend college. They were not given guidance as to college prep course offerings, or how to go about seeking out financial aid. As first generation college students, their families were unable to give them any guidance in this area. In sum, the implication from society and the PWI was that they could not be a part of higher education.

Participants in the persisters group also recounted numerous instances that occurred throughout their educational careers that demonstrated how much the myth of homogeneity continues in American society today. Jerri recounted an experience similar to what members of the departers group had stated regarding lack of guidance in high school relative to attending college. She expressed that when growing up, the emphasis was on working, not on education.

The only person who really gave her any direction was her mother and she encouraged her to take secretarial courses. "I kind of wanted to go into nursing but she . . . kept talking about you'll always be able to get a job." Jerri was unaware of any type of college prep track and ". . . took what I thought I was supposed to take. No one said, if you want to go to college, you should take this."

Desire for a Level Playing Field. The final category which emerged from the data was composed of three subcategories that included barriers, uniqueness, and lack of role models. Jennifer, from the departers group, commented that she saw herself acting as a trail blazer and noted that part of her goal was to "make it easier for the next group that goes in". She later stated that "the major barrier for African Americans as a whole is the attitude that we do not belong". She gave an example from a check-off performance during a lab skills practical saying, "I just felt like I had to be even better in order to be accepted. You get that feeling."

In her individual interview as a departer, Jean described her hunger for higher education. She told of a time when she and one other student from Middle visited the campus of Urban prior to the start of the fall semester.

> It was an awesome feeling. When we first arrived, we were so excited just to be on campus. . . . It's just the feeling that this is another, this is a brand new step, a new beginning to what we want to achieve. And we were so glad and proud to be here. And we were going to help each other. And you know, made statements of affirmation.

All of the departers participants, as first generation college students, spoke of serving as role models for their own children. Jean's son was still in high school when she first returned to school at Middle. She said he "hated homework" so part of her goal was "I'm going to show him this is what you have to do. . . . So I would come right home from classes, [and] start in on my homework. . . . and I think it helped him, I hope it helped him."

Several of the persisters group participants mentioned the expectation that they would run into prejudice in the work force, both from staff and patients. Karen said, "[W]e already know we're going to face prejudice anywhere we go. And it's just something that you have to learn to deal with." This feeling was based on reality as they related incidents that had already occurred while they were students. They cited situations of being ignored by staff on the hospital units and having patients refuse their care. These events were not a factor for their White counterparts.

All persister group participants identified barriers that were not atypical of most nontraditional students. They were also able to describe their perceptions of experiences specific to being African American students at a PWI and in American society. As first generation college students, they lacked role models for the higher education experience. Once in nursing education or practicing in the profession, the lack of role models continued to be a factor as they found our first hand how few Black registered nurses were in the field.

Conclusions

Participants in both groups discussed and agreed upon the perceived differences in the atmosphere/environment between a PBI and a PWI. Overall, Middle College was perceived as supportive and nurturing--a climate that served to increase the self-esteem of the participants. Although the literature lends credence to this perception of a PBI (Allen, 1988a, 1988b, Harvey & Williams, 1989), in this study the perception could also be traced to the differences in the mission statements between the two institutions. Middle College's philosophy was based in part on the idea that higher education needed to be available to all persons. A comprehensive university, Urban University was perceived by the participants as more competitive, and the nursing program in particular was perceived as more difficult compared to the core courses offered at Middle College.

McGee (1990) noted that campus climate is more significant to African Americans than most administrators realize. "It stands to reason that human beings will only tolerate unpleasant conditions for a limited amount of time if alternatives are available" (p. 72). As previously stated, three of the four persisters had experience at a state PWI. Descriptions ranged from feelings of prejudice to uncaring. The adage that "students vote with their feet" was apparent here since all left that particular institution and eventually enrolled at the PBI. A similar comparison could be made for members of the departer group in that all three returned to the PBI following dismissal from the nursing program at the PWI.

Researchers identify racism, social isolation, and alienation as the factors most likely to have the greatest negative impact [on retention]" (Rodgers, 1990, p. 38). Racism, prejudice, and oppression were recurrent themes throughout the study for participants in both groups and were found to overlap in the subcategories and final categories. According to Winkler (1991 in Janes, 1993), racism is more prevalent in society today than most White Americans are willing to admit. Winkler's statement could be expanded to include the prevalence of racism in the educational climate, especially as perceived by African Americans at PWIs.

The findings of this study were minimally supportive of McClusky's Power/Load/Margin Theory in offering an interpretation of the phenomenon of an erosion of Margin via the perceptions of nontraditional African American BSN students. Tinto's model was found to be applicable to those nontraditional African American BSN students who left a program of learning due to academic dismissal. As such, this study provides an extention of the application of Tinto's model since many of the same attributes demonstrated by individuals who voluntarily withdraw were found to be relevant to those individuals who leave due to academic dismissal.

Implications for Practice

In addition to local policy changes, a call for larger social change is also apparent as demonstrated by the changing demographics of the United States and subsequent health care needs of society. The nursing profession must become more reflective of the society at large which can only be attained by the profession becoming more inclusive. Thus, more people of color must gain admission to higher education and successfully complete programs of nursing education.

The continued existence and prevalence of racism in society, higher education, and at predominantly White institutions, was a major finding of this study. As demonstrated, the feelings of prejudice and racism that the participants encountered came from a variety of sources: students, faculty, and staff included. If we are to build inclusive communities, then the wider community needs to be educated on issues of racism and cultural diversity.

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Missing the Beat: Adult Learning Through Religious Music in an African American Church

Michael L. Rowland, PhD

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to understand the ways religious music contributes to learning and meaning making for African American adults within American society. Retrospective biographies were used to understand how the religious musical experiences of African American adults affect learning. The findings of the study are discussed.

Introduction

From the days of religious gatherings on hilltops, cotton fields, and barns to revivals in open fields or abandoned store fronts to the worship services in modern stately structures, the African American church has always been a place of worship and a place of teaching and learning. The strong oral tradition and use of oral teaching in the African American community secures music an important resource for teaching and learning in the African American community and church. Stansfield (1994) states, "It is possible to use data from oral traditions to track the quality of life experiences of those living in poor white or Afro-American communities. Testimony in Afro-American churches that serve the inner-city poor can be valuable sources of data about health care, labor market activities and child rearing" (p.185). The African American church presents a unique research opportunity for those seeking insight into the religious, psychosocial, educational, and political culture of African Americans.

Review of the literature

Mainstream adult education literature reveals little information on learning activities of African Americans (Briscoe &Ross, 1991; Ross-Gordon, 1991), particularly those sponsored by the African American church. Flannery (1995) contends adult learning theories must be mindful of the influence of social, historical, and economic roles in adult education. She states, "adult learning theories must acknowledge that people and cultures vary in how they learn" (p.156). She (1995) further stresses the need for adult learning theories to "become inclusive and give voice to all people and groups, allowing missing voices (women, working-class person, persons of color) to narrate their diverse stories of how and where they learn, and about their values of learning" (p.156).

Colin, III (1994) calls for an approach to education based on African American development and culture. This study is important for several reasons: (a) examining the impact of religious music on learning experiences of African American adults; (b) expanding Gardner's research on musical intelligence, and assisting adult educators to understand "musical ways of knowing"; (c) providing insight into alternative approaches and sources to teaching and learning via the humanities; and (d) exploring the use of religious music to empower individuals and groups for social change, and (e) contributing another perspective on the learning and educational needs and experiences of African American adult learners. The findings contribute to the field of adult education research by focusing on the African American experience.

Some writers in adult education have focused their attention on music and its impact on adults. The literature of adult education notes particularly (a) how important music is in the lives of adults and (b) the impact of music on human developments and civilization. Yet, despite the importance of music in the lives of adults, very little research has been conducted linking music and adult learning.

Zanzig (1936) raised the issue of the importance of music in society. He emphasized that "Music tends, even without the aid of teachers or courses, to be profoundly educative. It seems to reach directly to those innermost layers of our natures which the purely intellectual subjects are likely to leave untouched, and yet which are the very basis of what we are and of what we shall become" (p.365-366).

Van de Wall (1938) seemed to concur with Zanzig and particularly held adult educators responsible for not including music as part of the curriculum in education. Van de Wall (1938) wrote:

> There is in education circles today some confusion as to the significance and place of music in Adult Education. It is also attributable to the fact that music specialists and teachers have not escaped the isolation which seems to be the penalty for specialization; neither have all of them yet learned to exchange ideas and to work amicably side by side with educators in different fields and with other protagonists of community culture (p.V).

While music has received some attention in the literature of adult education, more attention has been given to the role of music in social and political movements. From the early days of Jane Addams, founder of the Hull House in 1886, the Traveling Chautauquas, to Myles Horton and the Highlander folk school, music has and continues to reflect the hopes, dreams and struggles and learning in the lives of many adults. Myles Horton and his wife Zilphia included music and the arts as an integral part of the mission and curriculum of the Highlander Folk School. Horton (1973) stated,

> Today, as in the past, Highlander is pioneering music workshops, community musical activities, and on occasion—the rediscovery of the musical heritage often buried in the Appalachian hollows Ballads, hymns, folk songs, and songs of protest all these have done much to arouse people to awareness and to the sense of community (pp. 329-330)

According to Gardner (1983) "of all the gifts with which individuals may be endowed, none emerges earlier than musical talent" (p. 99). Gardner contends those persons whose dominant intelligence is musical learn best through activities that engage them through rhythm and melody. Gardner also notes the link between musical intelligence to the personal intelligences (interpersonal and intrapersonal) because each intelligence deals with feelings and communication of those feelings. There are at least seven different types of intelligences, which include, (a) linguistic, (b) logical-mathematical, (c) spatial, (d) bodily kinesthetic, (e) intrapersonal and (f) interpersonal and (g) musical intelligence.

Bell (1996) views religious music as an important resource for African Americans in their survival and struggles with the pressures of society. He understands the power of this music to effect change in the lives of African Americans. He writes, "Embracing religion that was undergirded by this music helped slaves to be free in their own minds" (p.1). He further notes, "There must be a connection between this music and how we utilized it in earlier ordeals and its potential for now. But how do I find the connection and –assuming I can convince others of my discovery?" (p. 11).

The **purpose** of this dissertation study was to understand the ways in which religious music contributes to the nature and extent of learning and meaning making of African American adults within American society. The study explored the question, is religious music educative in the African American church?

Methodology. This descriptive research study used retrospective biographies to inductively understand how the religious musical experiences of African American adults affect learning. Descriptive and interpretive methodology was chosen for several reasons, first, for its ability to allow the participants to express themselves freely and openly, in their own words.

Second, the descriptive and interpretive approach permitted me to more deeply examine and understand the participant's experiences with religious music and learning in the African American church. Third, because there is very little information about ways in which religious music is educative for African American adults, qualitative methodology allowed me to more thoroughly explore this process. The study was designed to gather information from various individuals within an African American church, including clergy, musicians, choir members and non-choir members.

Data Collection. Over forty interviews were conducted with African American adults (choir members, members of the congregation, pastor, ministers, Christian education leaders, and a group of "subject matter experts" in the area of religious music). The church members (all from the same congregation) were asked to reflect, interact, discuss and respond to questions about their musical experiences and learning. The subject matter experts were not members of the church but were selected based on their knowledge and experience with African American religious music. The study also included document analysis and field observation as part of data collection.

Van Manen (1990) states, "theme analysis refers then to the process of recovering the theme or themes that are embodied and dramatized in the evolving meanings and imagery of the work" (p.78). Several themes emerged from the data, which became a tool to understand the educative value of religious music for African American adults. The major themes that emerged were: (a) adult's musical background and influences, (b) theology, (c) "bad theology", (d) music as a pedagogical tool, (e) sense of unity, (f) choir participation, (g) softening the heart, (h) religious music and learning, and (i) learning.

Musical background included the childhood experiences of the participants. The majority of the participants had some early musical experience either having studied music privately or exposed to musical training in school or college that helped shape their present attitudes toward music. Another factor shaping the musical background of the participants were the importance of family members, friends and the church in the development of musical tastes and preferences. For many participants religious music was a shared family activity that united and bonded the family ties of the participants. Most importantly the participants noted their early musical beginnings helped shaped their theological foundation by introducing Christian themes and ideas.

All of the participants indicated they learned theology from religious music. For many, the music contained more of the theological messages than the sermon. Participants discussed three types of theology found in religious music; the theology of their ancestors, theology which conveyed events and stories found in the Bible; and theology rooted in faith, beliefs and convictions.

The subject matter experts believed African American adults often learned "bad theology" from the lyrics of some religious music. These experts noted the lack of critical analysis of music lyrics by church participants. However, the church participants were more concerned with the genres of religious music having a negative impact on the worship experience and more importantly whether the lyrics contained the words "God" or "Jesus". For the church participants, if these words appeared in the lyrics, then the songs was considered theologically sound.

All of the participants viewed religious music as an important teaching tool in the church. Participants noted music was able to reach and teach a variety of learners who may be at different stages in the religious and spiritual growth. The pastor of the church stated, "When you learn a song, you also give yourself in a way to it. And I think when we truly learn it, transformation takes place, that learning process. We sing it because we believe it."

Religious music was viewed as a way to increase the sense of unity among the congregation. Many believed the music shaped the identity of the church and they perceived themselves in relation to other religious communitites of African American churches.

Participants indicated their participation in a musical organization within the church was a learning experience. They spoke of learning to work together, learning musical skills, interpersonal skills and developing social skills from their involvement in the choir. Religious music was seen as educative by the participants when it used as an aid to guide, instruct, and cope during difficult and oppressive times. Participants spoke of learning from the emotions and experiences of each other through the music. This was spoken of as "softening the muscles of your heart" by one participant.

The participants thought religious music and learning was interconnected. Participants spoke of learning in the church as: (a) subconscious mind never sleeps, (b) incidental learning where the music provides the opportunity to learn social skills, business skills and communication skills, and (c) learning cannot be isolated from life. Learning could in the church in a variety of ways, through people, informal opportunities, formal studies and through religious music being incorporated into every area of the church.

Findings. African American adults in this study perceived religious music as educative in two ways. First, as a source to transmit basic Biblical beliefs and theological statements that served to reinforce what was heard in the teachings, scriptures, and sermon in the church. Second, it was further educative simply as an appreciation of music as a cultural art form in the church. The Biblical beliefs and theology heard in the music influenced the thinking and affected the views of the participants toward life, God, religion, and racial issues. As one participant noted, "we sing it because we believe it" was true for many of the participants in this study.

However, what is learned individually and collectively or how extensive the learning that occurred from religious music varied greatly among the participants and requires further study.

Summary and Discussion. The purpose of this study was to explore the question: Is religious music educative in the African American church? Although each participant thought of religious music as educative what many described and agreed upon was that religious music is inspirational. Religious music was an important tool to transmit basic biblical beliefs and scriptures which served to reinforce what was heard in the teachings, scriptures and sermons of the church. For many particpants, religious music was educative as simply by its art form and the appreciation of the cultural form it expressed in the African American church. The participants were taught important concepts of endurance, liberation, and unity through religious music. These concepts affected their views toward life, God, religious, racial issues and views of themeselves.

Although religious music was seen as educative when it aroused emotions, there was no recognition of music as a control mechanism that might manipulate the emotions of the church. In addition, there was a notable lack of concern for social action expressed by the participants which was an important cultural messages of early African American religious music.

Spirituality, religion, and religious music are not isolated from learning nor are they any longer strictly within confined to the church. Goldberger (1996) noted the profound influence of religion and the Black church in the lives of African American women in her work Women's Ways of Knowing.

Adult education programs that focus on understanding adult development and transformative learning could benefit from understanding the way religious music affects various cultures, ethnic groups and to identify the influence of religious music on basic beliefs and worldviews of their adult students. Exploring personal beliefs through religious music would enable learners to become engaged with music in a way that could provide an opportunity to learn from one another. The potential for using religious music to expand critical thinking of basic beliefs and assumptions could foster new ways of thinking and viewing the world for adult learners. Because religious music has played such an important role in the African American church and community, it presents an opportunity to discuss issues related to race and gender in religious music. For instance, how does religious music promote or discourage sexism or racism?

Religious music has always been an integral role in the history and culture of African Americans and yet there is little research that explores the educative value or its affects on African American adults.

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The Politics of Consumer Education Materials Used in Adult Literacy Classrooms

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Abstract. This study examined consumer education texts used in adult literacy programs to see how they portray adult literacy students as consumers and the consumer market. It was concluded that the hidden curriculum of the texts promotes reproduction of class inequalities.

Background, Purpose, & Methodology

For the last 30 years, "life skills" education, and more specifically consumer education, has been considered a viable part of adult literacy education (Lankshear, 1993; Office of Technology Assessment, 1993). Throughout this period, many adult literacy programs offering consumer education have taught a variety of "coping skills" centered around specific "real-life" tasks such as unit pricing and household budgeting, and have operated under the assumption that literacy education can solve the financial problems of adult literacy students through teaching better money-handling behaviors. The dominant message in public rhetoric and mainstream consumer education literature and practice stresses consumer education's positive goals and benefits, and the majority of empirical research on consumer education has sought to determine how participation in consumer education programs affects consumer behavior. The focus of consumer education in adult literacy programs has been on teaching technical skills that create savvy consumers (Fingeret, 1992), which supports the idea that consumer problems lie within individual consumers. A more critical approach sees the problem not as an inability to handle money wisely, but as one of resource scarcity in an increasingly unstable economic climate.

Research based in the critical sociology of education and conducted in K-12 education contexts has examined how the hidden curricula in schools, or "the unstated norms, values and beliefs that are transmitted to students through the underlying structure of meaning in both the formal content as well as the social relations of school and classroom life" (Giroux & Penna, 1979, p. 22), help to reproduce social inequalities (Anyon, 1981; Apple, 1990). While this type of research, which includes critically analyzing curricular materials to explicate implicit ideological messages and assumptions contained in them, has recently begun to have a presence in adult literacy education (Auerbach & Burgess, 1985; Lankshear, 1993; Quigley, 1997; Quigley & Holsinger, 1993; Venema, 1995), similar analyses have been lacking with regard to consumer education curriculum materials that are used in adult literacy classrooms. The purpose of this study was to determine the ways in which consumer education texts used in literacy classrooms portray adult literacy students as consumers, the consumer situations of adult literacy students, and the consumer market within which adult literacy students operate.

I examined 13 lessons about consumer issues that were contained in 5 widely-used adult literacy texts. When analyzing the lessons, I followed Wilson's (1991) strategy, which is based on Marxist literary criticism. This strategy consists of paying attention to three issues: "the type of content" contained in a text, "the form or structure of how that content appears," and "absences or omissions in the text with respect to alternative points of view" (Wilson, 1991, p. 67). Because one of the main purposes of analyzing these documents was to look at the underlying ideologies or the "taken-for-granted" view of the world contained within consumer education texts, it was important to examine not only what information is contained in them and how this information is presented, but also what types of information are left out of the texts. Eagleton (1976) discusses the notion of silence in a text to explain why it is important to look at not only what is contained in a text but also what is missing. He explains that "a work is tied to ideology not so much by what it says as by what it does not say. It is in the significant silences of text, in its gaps and absences, that the presence of ideology can be most positively felt" (1976, p. 34). Thus, because I was interested in examining ideology within the texts, all three areas in the consumer education curricula were looked at. With regard to ideology, I was specifically interested in the taken-for-granted assumptions the texts held about adult learners, what the texts assumed the purpose of consumer education is, and whether the texts upheld or contradicted the current status quo of inequality in the United States, especially with regard to issues of class.

Findings

Analysis of the consumer education texts centered around three aspects of the texts: lesson content, lesson form, and textbook ideology.

Lesson Content. The five books in the sample contain a total of thirteen lessons about consumer issues. Of these thirteen lessons, eleven are long lessons, chapters, or units (with 10 or more pages of text), all with sub-headings and multiple activities contained within them. The remaining two lessons are each one page in length and consist of one or two simple exercises each. The topics discussed in the activities include using banks and checking accounts, using credit cards, budgeting, being a "smart shopper," owning a car, and buying insurance. Almost every lesson also contains what is called a "life skills workshop" at the end of the chapter. These "workshops" typically show a picture of some "real world" item like a check, a deposit slip, or a credit card application form, demonstrate how to fill it out, and then ask the reader to fill out a blank one that is also supplied, usually with information that is provided to the student.

Most of the topics covered in the texts fall into the category of "technical skills." The majority of the lessons address practical matters such as how to pay bills, how to plan a budget, how to apply for credit, and how to write a check. A smaller minor theme that showed up in two lessons concerns "consumer advocacy" information. In one lesson this information consists of how to check a credit record to ensure that it contains accurate information, and information about what a credit counselor is. The second lesson that deals with consumer advocacy warns that sometimes businesses who want customers to use credit will give them "the run around."

Lesson Form. Most of the lessons contain a variety of different activities and exercises. The lessons typically open with a reading passage to introduce a topic, and give students suggestions about what to "think about as you read." At the end of the chapter or interspersed between reading passages are activities with questions designed to determine if students are remembering what they are reading, to check comprehension or vocabulary, or to review math or language skills. These activities consist of fill-in-the-blank questions, questions requiring longer (sentence-length) answers, sentence completion exercises, crossword puzzles, and circle-the-answer and vocabulary matching activities. Also included are "thinking and writing" activities in which students are given a statement and asked to think and write about it on the five blank lines given, and fill-in-the-bubble questions in which students are given a question and three or four possible correct answers, and are asked to bubble in a circle next to the correct answer.

Ideologies Within the Materials. Two major themes emerged with regard to ideologies in these textbooks. The first, which I call "halfwit consumers," concerns assumptions about the learners who are using the texts. The second, which after Quigley & Holsinger (1993) I call "happy consciousness," concerns assumptions about society and about the market system within which the students exist.

Halfwit consumers. The first theme captures the general attitude that these texts convey about the people assumed to be reading them. While not every lesson includes this attitude, in general both the content and the forms of the lessons assume that students have had little experience with the real world skills they are teaching, and that without proper guidance students will spend more than they have, go into debt, and make "unwise" consumer decisions.

First, the content of most of the lessons is very basic and starts with the assumption that learners know very little about very simple ideas. For instance, one text explains the concept of a budget in a way that assumes that learners do not already budget their money:

> *You use your income to pay your expenses. You have two kinds of expenses. They are your needs and your wants. You need food, clothes, and a home. Your wants help you to enjoy life. You may want to go out to eat. You may want to go to concerts and movies. Your budget helps you plan how to spend and save your money. Your budget includes all of your needs. It includes some of the things you want. Your budget can also help you save some money each month. (Life Skills: Money and Consumers, p. 37, Steck-Vaughn, 1994)*

Another assumption made by the texts is that the adult learners reading the texts have insatiable consumer appetites. This theme is especially clear in many of the lessons on credit, in which the texts imply that if adult literacy students get a credit card, they are likely to overspend and get "in trouble" if they are not careful. This assumption is clear in this passage:

> *Buy now and pay later is what credit is all about. Credit allows you to buy things you need even though you don't have the money to pay for them right now. Buying everything from cars to clothes on credit has become a popular way of life in America. "Incredible!" you say. "Where do I sign up?" Slow down. Think first. Remember that credit isn't an invitation to rush out and buy everything you always wanted. Credit carries certain duties with it. Before you get yourself into debt, let's read the fine print and see how credit really works. (Reading for Tomorrow, Bk. 2, p. 84, Steck-Vaughn, 1990)*

Finally, most of the texts contain the attitude that the adult learners using the texts are more like children than adults. These texts assume that these "childlike" adults need to be told exactly what to do so that they will act correctly. Many of the reading passages in the texts give advice or admonishment to students about making sure they behave properly with regard to money. For instance, one text admonishes:

> *Your budget can help you pay your bills. When you plan your budget, think about the bills you need to pay. Then set aside money for these bills. Keep the money for paying bills in a savings account or in a checking account. You can move money from your savings account into your checking account when you need to pay bills. (Life Skills: Money and Consumers, p. 46, Steck-Vaughn, 1994)*

Many of these books, which are written expressly for an adult audience, almost completely disregard the fact that most adults are fully functional in the world and have a great deal of life experience and knowledge of how the world works, despite having little formal education. The forms of the texts and activities reinforce the message that adult learners have little background knowledge and little to contribute, because while some of the questions are designed to allow learners to write their own sentences, the majority provide all of the information that is needed to answer the question "correctly," and they simply ask the learner to choose the right answer. This creates passive learners and promotes the idea that knowledge does not come from within and is not created, but rather is given and regurgitated. In sum, these lessons generally view adult learners as people who have little prior knowledge and who know little about consumer issues.

The lessons offer technical information but also advice about how to be a good consumer and admonishment about what might happen if learners do not follow the texts' rules. Not every lesson includes these types of attitudes, however, and the two lessons discussed earlier that contain consumer advocacy information are also more respectful of students' life experience and knowledge, and do not project this "halfwit consumer" attitude to the extent that the majority of the other lessons do.

Happy consciousness. A second major theme concerns assumptions about society and the market system within which learners exist. Quigley & Holsinger (1993) state that happy consciousness exists when "the established social system is considered rational and . . . is understood . . . to provide people with satisfying lives" (p. 25). They further explain that happy consciousness is "reflected in a blind acceptance of the order of things" and is "the complete absence of critical thought" (p. 25).

This theme of happy consciousness emerged in many of the lessons. The texts promote the idea that banks and other institutions exist primarily to provide services to customers, that they are fair, and that lenders are benevolent and will help customers who get into trouble. For instance, one text discusses the many services that banks provide, and encourages learners to shop around for a bank that is convenient and that provides the best services for the best price:

> *Not all banks are the same. They pay different amounts of interest for different kinds of accounts. Look for a bank that pays higher interest on savings accounts. You also want a bank that charges less money for other services. What else do you look for when you choose a bank? You may want a bank that is near your home or your job. You may want a bank that is open on Saturdays. Many banks also stay open late at least one night each week . . . Savings accounts are one type of bank service. Banks provide many different services. These services help you save and borrow money. They allow you to write checks and protect important papers. Visit banks to learn about the services that can help you. (Life Skills: Money and Consumers, pp. 9-10, Steck-Vaughn, 1994)*

This text leaves out the fact that in many low-income neighborhoods the only banking services available to banking customers are ATM machines. It also ignores the fact that banks operate on a profit motive and that it has become increasingly unprofitable for banks to keep branches in low-income neighborhoods. As a result bank branches have been closing, making it increasingly difficult for poorer customers to have access to banking services. It is hard to comparison shop for competitive rates and convenient hours when there are no banks in your neighborhood! Federal Reserve Bank surveys have shown that the percentage of households in the poorest quintile who have banking accounts dropped over 11 percent between 1977 and 1989 (Jacobson, 1995). Much of this drop was a direct result of financial deregulation in the 1980s, which allowed banks to close unprofitable branches in low-income neighborhoods without approval. To further exacerbate the problem of accessibility, checking account fees rose throughout this period, along with minimum deposit amounts (Caskey, 1994; Jacobson, 1995).

Many of the texts that discuss credit and credit cards assume that anyone who applies for a credit card or a loan can receive one. In fact, these lessons hardly entertain the idea that an applicant could be denied. For instance, one lesson states

> *How can you get a credit card? You must be eighteen years old. First, fill out a credit card application. The Life Skills Workshop on page 32 shows you how to do this. After you have filled out the application, mail it to the address on the form. Then wait a few weeks. During that time the credit card company will check the information on your*

> *application. The company wants to be sure you will be able to pay your credit card bills. (Life Skills: Money and Consumers, p. 28, Steck-Vaughn, 1994)*

This text does not mention that a significant percent of people who apply for loans and credit are denied, and ignores the fact that minorities are more likely to be denied loans by banks than Whites. A study by the Federal Reserve bank of Boston found that even when African American and Latino loan-seekers had the same financial characteristics as White loan-seekers, they were 56% more likely to be denied a mortgage (Folbre, 1995).

Many of the lessons also promote the idea that lending institutions are understanding and eager to help people who have fallen behind in their payments. For instance, one text states

> *Ten years ago, after Fred Johnson enlisted in the military, he had trouble meeting his credit obligations. His father was in the hospital with a severe injury, and Fred faced huge hospital and doctor bills. Fortunately, Fred didn't try to conceal the problem. He notified his creditors right away. He told them why he was having financial problems. The creditors understood Fred's situation. They were willing to let Fred adapt his payment plan so he could meet his obligations. Because Fred didn't wait until he was months behind in his payments, the lenders believed his story. Fred got in touch with a debt counselor to get professional help with his problem. The counselor informed Fred of his credit rights. Together they cleaned up his bad credit record. (Reading for Tomorrow, Bk. 2, p. 91, Steck-Vaughn, 1990)*

This text assumes that lenders are willing to cooperate with customers, and leaves out the harsh realities of repossessed good, foreclosed homes, and ruined credit records that prevent many people from obtaining bank accounts and future credit.

Not all of the lessons assume that businesses and the consumer market always help the consumer, but even in the few lessons in which characters encounter money problems, the situations are resolved in favor of the characters. Thus, even these lessons leave you with the "happily ever after" feeling, which is a characteristic of "happy consciousness." For instance, two lessons present stories about a couple that are in the process of looking for furniture. These stories portray the consumers as smart and critical, and portray the salespeople as tricky and untrustworthy. In these two stories, the consumers are active, question authority, and do not assume they are being treated fairly. But even though these stories question business practices and expose the exploitation that some businesses participate in, in the end the stories are cheerily resolved and have happy endings. This can be seen in the excerpt below:

> *Star and Ray looked some more. They didn't find any furniture that day. It took two months before they once again saw some bedroom furniture they wanted. It was at the Holiday Home Furniture Company. By then they had saved a little more money, and they could afford to put more money down. They could pay a bit more every month, so the bill would be paid sooner. "I feel much better about this," said Star. "We are buying from a store with a good name, and we will be paying bills we can afford. I think we got a fine bedroom set, too." (Reading for Today, Bk. 5, p. 11, Steck-Vaughn, 1987)*

Discussion: Reproduction of Inequality through Consumer Education

The results of this study show that in several ways these consumer education textbooks operate, through hidden curriculum and ideologies promoting unquestioning acceptance of the present system, to reproduce class inequality in this country. They assume learners have no prior knowledge and thus keep instruction and the discussion of issues on a very technical and practical level. This promotes the ideology that if consumers learn enough about how to manage their money, they will have happy and successful lives. These texts also promote the myth of meritocracy; that is, if learners work hard, are more careful with their money, and save money, they will be able to be middle class just like all of the rest of us. This, of course, is not true; the only way in an advanced capitalist system like ours that some people can be wealthy is if others are not. Teaching learners, many of whom surely know these things, how to better handle money will not allow them to become "successful." The discussion in the texts stays at a practical and technical level and never steps back to consider the larger context within which students are living. These textbooks naturalize the status quo and fail to question whether or not our social and economic systems are the best ones we can imagine. The lessons present happy and satisfied consumers who have learned to save or have learned to get a bargain at the grocery store, and do not discuss the ways in which the market fails people—for instance, how some people cannot find banks in their neighborhoods because banks have been closing branches in low-income neighborhoods, how some people cannot get accounts at banks, or how many grocery stores in low-income neighborhoods charge more for the same items than in suburban stores because of low demand and high cost of operation. These books portray characters who have jobs, work hard, and are rewarded, thus also reproducing the myth that everyone who works hard and wants to succeed financially actually can. All of this promotes an ideology that works in favor of those in power. Education that focuses on helping people with low incomes simply manage their money better and that does not address structural problems inherent in our market system places blame for personal economic situations wholly on the individual and ignores the structural systems that create these economic situations in the first place.

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Living Outside the Circle: The Politics of HIV/AIDS Education and the Disenfranchisement of HIV-Negative Gay Men

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Abstract: The purpose of this qualitative study was to use the lens of political planning theory to explore the relationship between how HIV-negative gay men think HIV/AIDS prevention efforts Ashould@ be handled and how they actually *are* handled.

Background, Problem, and Methods

Within the last 15 years the Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) has emerged from complete obscurity to become the leading cause of death for Americans 25 to 44 years of age (Altman, 1995). According to current estimates there are more than 900,000 people, or about 1 out of every 280 Americans, infected with the virus (Karon et al., 1996). These infections are not uniformly distributed among the United States' adult population however. Of those men who self-identify as being gay, an estimated 70% of older men living in large urban centers and 10-40% of younger men are presumed to have HIV disease (Hoover et al., 1991).

Of the almost 360,000 cases of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) reported through June 1998 among men having sex with men (CDC, 1998), all but about 6,000 were reported during or after January 1989. Given the normal length of delay between infection with HIV and an AIDS diagnosis, it can be inferred that most gay men with AIDS were probably infected after 1985, the first year that antibody testing made it possible to determine if a healthy looking person was or was not infected with HIV. Under best-case conditions then, if antibody testing had been encouraged from the time it first became available, and if this testing had been functionally linked to a 100% effective program of prevention education specifically targeting uninfected gay men, it is possible that up to 354,000 cases of AIDS could have been prevented.

The above assertion is naively simplistic of course. Ignoring for a moment the implausibility of designing a 100% effective prevention program, a core reality of education planning in the gay community is that HIV education programs targeting gay men have almost never specifically targeted *uninfected* gay men. Instead, prevention programs are designed without reference to participants' HIV status. This is not by accident. Planning for HIV prevention education occurs in a turbulent world of often-conflicting political, social, medical, and economic interests and it is the relative priority assigned to each of these interests--not just to those of uninfected people--which drive program planning decisions. Since the beginning of the epidemic, that process has routinely given the needs of HIV-negative gay men a low priority.

In the earliest years of the epidemic, the highest priority was given to those interests that stressed community solidarity and protection for the HIV-infected. With good reason, activists working in gay organizations saw AIDS not just as a personal tragedy but as a political threat to hard-won civil rights and the long push toward inclusion of homosexuals as fully franchised citizens of the United States (Shilts, 1988). The response of those activists was to circle the wagons; provide shelter for the infected at the protected heart of the community and present at least the appearance of a unified front both to the outside world and to other gay men (Patton, 1990; Rofes, 1996; Rotello, 1997). Accordingly, gay men, regardless of their HIV serostatus, were massed together as education targets by prevention planners into one generic bloc and presented with information that focused on the similarities they shared while ignoring the very real serostatus differences that divided them. Furthermore, this information was presented in a context that stressed the pragmatic need to protect the disenfranchised by placing the interests, sensibilities, and concerns of the infected over those of the uninfected (Rotello, 1997). Unfortunately, this well-intentioned approach has served only to replace one disenfranchised group with another. Uninfected gay men, denied the right to publicly discuss their own need for inclusion and support, have been actively encouraged to view themselves only in relation to how their actions affect HIV-positive gay men (Rofes, 1996). Ironically, this also means that the unique prevention needs of the people most capable of benefiting from HIV/AIDS prevention education are also seen only in relation to the needs of people for whom the primary benefit of prevention is no longer relevant. Furthermore, this situation has proven to be remarkably stable. Despite large-scale changes in the general public's acceptance of HIV-positive people over the last 18 years, adult education planners and facilitators working in the gay community still routinely subordinate the priorities of HIV-negative gay men to other interests.

Does this state of affairs meet with approval by HIV-negative gay men? Does it *matter* if it meets with their approval or not? High and rising rates of HIV-infection among gay men have led to assertions that prevention education efforts for the gay community have either failed or were never effectively delivered in the first place (Odets, 1995a; Rofes, 1996; Van Gorder, 1995). Yet those efforts have remained essentially unchanged over the last 18 years. Why? What is causing the situation's inherent stability? Unfortunately, very little empirical research has been done in understanding the relationship between the prevention needs and concerns of HIV-negative gay men and the political realities of community-based HIV education. The purpose of this qualitative study was to address these issues by using the lens of political planning theory (Cervero & Wilson, 1996) to explore the interrelated nature of program planner and program participant interests in HIV/AIDS education for gay men. In short, to examine the relationship between how HIV-negative gay men think prevention efforts "should" be handled and how they actually *are* handled.

The site of the study was a large, urban AIDS service organization, here called "Helping Hearts, Inc." Individuals who planned, facilitated, or attended Helping Hearts education and support programs designed to address HIV/AIDS transmission and prevention in the lives of gay men formed the unit of analysis for the study. All programs attended by participants in this study were designed for "generic" (undifferentiated by serostatus) gay men. At the time of the study, Helping Hearts had never designed nor presented an educational program specifically targeting HIV-negative gay men. Data collection primarily consisted of audio-taped interviews with a total of 24 agency institutional leaders, planners, program facilitators, and HIV-negative gay men who had attended one or more of the programs included in the study. Additional data sources consisted of official agency documents, program marketing tools, copies of educational curricula, and personal documents brought in by study respondents. Data were analyzed according to the constant comparative method. A qualitative approach to data collection and analysis was selected because a naturalistic mode of inquiry which encourages dialogue and self-reflection was considered to be best suited for revealing the participants= own understanding of their decisions and experiences.

Findings

There were six major findings from the study. Two of these emerged from interviews with HIV-negative gay men who attended HIV education programs at Helping Hearts. These included first, that many uninfected gay men have a desire for prevention education that is designed to acknowledge, address, and give value to their identity as HIV-negative individuals. And second, that program participants feel HIV/AIDS educators should assist in bringing about a cultural change that would help HIV-negative gay men survive and thrive as valued members of an HIV-centric society. The other four findings emerged from interviews with program planners, facilitators, and agency leaders at Helping Hearts. These included first, that HIV/AIDS education continues to play a role in maintaining the appearance of a cohesive gay society by reinforcing the myth of generic (undifferentiated by serostatus) gay men requiring generic (undifferentiated by need) prevention education. Second, that the felt need to promote solidarity in the gay community is not the sole- -or even the most personally compelling--reason that education planners continue to support undifferentiated prevention education for gay men. Third, that a strong institutional interest in avoiding public controversy controls educational planning decisions. And fourth, that this institutional desire to avoid controversy is combined with a personal philosophy of non-interference to make education leaders reluctant to act as agents of social change for gay men, even when that change would directly benefit (uninfected) gay men. Each of these findings is briefly discussed below.

Program Participants. First, while program participants expressed a diversity of educational expectations, a common thread was their desire for education based on an (as yet unrealized) acknowledgment of their separateness from HIV-positive gay men. As one program participant said, "if there are two [serostatus] categories, HIV-negative is not one of them." Currently, self-understanding for uninfected gay men is not conceptualized around what they are; it is conceptualized around what they are *not*. Or, as another program participant said, "we only know what it is like to be HIV-positive and I am not that." This situation leaves many HIV-negative men feeling unprepared to address the complexity of HIV in their own lives and dissatisfied with advice that they simply "find other issues to actualize their identity around," as one program planner suggested.

An analysis of the data also revealed that program participants feel HIV/AIDS educators should (but don't) go beyond helping individual gay men to promoting a cultural change that would help all HIV-negative gay men thrive as valued members of an HIV-centric society. As one HIV-negative gay man said, "I don't know if there is a program that confers protection [against infection] but I do know that there could be programs that confer *value* on being uninfected." The depth of this need was starkly apparent. When asked "Do you think that the gay community provides support for HIV negative gay men?," *every single person* interviewed for this study but one answered with a resounding "No!" The lone dissident based his belief on "... our adult films now. The male stars are obviously wearing a condom, you can see it." The feelings of the rest of the respondents are concisely encapsulated in one HIV-positive man's acknowledgment: "We don't support the value of being negative the way that we do being positive." Not surprisingly then, analysis of the data also revealed that internalizing this perception provides some gay men with an incentive to become HIV positive. As one program participant put it, "I am sure it's like this golden door opening. Maybe I am romanticizing it but it seems totally wonderful, you enter this wonderful world of open arms and loving people when you become positive but when you are negative there is nothing."

Program Planners. As mentioned above, the marginalization of HIV-negative gay men is not a new phenomenon. Adult education planners began early in the epidemic to suppress the separate needs of HIV-negative gay men in order to focus their efforts on promoting at least the appearance of solidarity among all gay men. Study findings support the assertion that with the passing of time, the worsening of the epidemic, and the general move towards political conservatism in American society, this perceived need to present a united front has remained unchanged. An analysis of the data suggests that within this frame, HIV educators have little incentive to publicly acknowledge the separate educational needs and issues of HIV-negative gay men and much incentive to continue to treat them generically. In fact, until the larger battle for equality is won, the greatest good for the greatest number may require that educators continue to push the separate identity and educational needs of uninfected gay men into the shadows. Because, as two Helping Hearts program planners pointed out, "you may be doing yourself a ... disservice to try to segment the population" (current director of Gay Outreach) by "dividing them into two camps" (former director of Gay Outreach). The solution then, as another planner put it, is to "make anything that looks like a disagreement a background issue. Make people keep their mouths shut."

The findings also suggest that education planners would still report a compelling interest in promoting undifferentiated education for gay men even in the absence of a felt need to promote solidarity in the gay community. That is, that despite being fully aware that infected and uninfected gay men may have different motivations for engaging in safer sex, and that HIV-negative men certainly face far more serious consequences for failing to do so, education planners still insist that it is unwise to provide programs specifically designed to address the unique prevention needs of HIV-negative gay men. This decision was not based on the perception that such classes would be unpopular with HIV negative clients. On the contrary, as one education leader asserted, "if I advertised a [class] just for HIV-negative gay men, I could fill it right away." Rather, this opinion appears to be rooted in two deeply held, albeit untested, beliefs. First, that the various benefits of education which include HIV-positive and negative gay men in the same discussion will always outweigh the singular benefits of targeted education solely for HIV-negative gay men. And second, that prevention education should target behavior, not (serostatus) identity. In support of the first belief, education planners referred to post-program evaluations that consistently and uniformly reported respondents as preferring mixed (by serostatus) classes. On the other hand, since the programs those evaluations referred to were intentionally designed to address mixed audiences, this was not a totally surprising outcome. Without classes providing education targeted by serostatus to use for comparison purposes, the belief remains ultimately untested. The same lack of evidence applies to the second belief. Because prevention programs sponsored by Helping Hearts invariably avoided customizing messages by serostatus identity, there was no way to test the planners' assertion that prevention education should address behavior in a vacuum, rather than in the context of sersostatus identity. Their lack of supporting evidence did not, however, prevent program planners from staunchly defending either belief as a justification for continuing to provide undifferentiated education.

Third, findings revealed a compelling institutional interest in avoiding controversy when designing prevention education for gay men. This interest seems to be the result of economic, political, and social pressures on the agency. Economically, from the agency director's perspective, what really matters in making programmatic decisions is, "how the donors look at it." Because, "without funding, *no* messages get out." For political reasons related to the agency's history with gay men, the agency's education department director concurs. "I am not convinced," he says, "that taking a stand, on any particular issue, is the healthiest thing for us to do." The agency's job, he maintains "is to go into the gay male community, "try not to offend people if we can at all help it...and get the hell out." This attitude is hard won. When a previous administration was perceived as turning its back on the gay community in favor of broadening the agency's service area to other affected populations, Helping Hearts was widely viewed as betraying its founding mission of providing assistance and support to infected gay men. Subsequent financial and volunteer support from the gay community dropped precipitously and was not replaced by equal funding and volunteer support from the straight community. Not surprisingly then, the current agency administration sees reversing this perception of gay neglect as a top priority. Socially, analysis of the data reveal that the agency's interest in avoiding controversy is intertwined with the first two program planner findings, controls what sort of education may be offered, and largely underlies the belief noted above that prevention education should address behavior in an identity vacuum. Singling HIV-negative gay men out for separate attention would simply be too controversial in a community that places serving the needs of people with HIV, not without it, at the heart of its collective identity.

Finally, study findings also revealed that the above institutional interest in avoiding controversy is combined with a personal philosophy of non-interference to make education leaders reluctant to go beyond providing assistance for individual gay men to acting as agents of social change for gay men as a group. Rotello (1997) argues that HIV education not only can, but *must* convince gay men that they need to change gay sexual culture in fundamental ways if they, as a society, are to survive and thrive in a world that has shown itself incapable of curing or preventing communicable disease. Unfortunately, his argument runs headlong against the obstacle of many gay men's lived experience. Most of the respondents interviewed in this study exhibited an almost visceral loathing for what they perceived as authoritarian education. This is a response that in many cases seems to spring from childhood memories of rejection and disenfranchisement while growing up gay in a society that despises and denigrates homosexuality. Among HIV education planners and facilitators (all of whom were themselves gay men) this contempt for punitive authority exhibited itself as an extreme aversion to being perceived as using their position of power to impose their own beliefs on other people (i.e., program participants). Among education planners and facilitators, the resultant golden-rule-based doctrine ("because I would not want others to tell me what to do, I can not, in good faith, tell others what to do") appears stronger than any desire to exert leadership authority. This was true even in cases in which an education planner or facilitator felt the public health was at stake. Hence, when this personal doctrine is combined with an institutional reluctance to do anything that the local gay community might find polarizing or offensive, a compelling interest in avoiding an appearance of dictatorial authority is formed.

Conclusions and Discussion

The findings suggest three general conclusions. First, that the educational expectations of HIV-negative gay men and the educational philosophies of program planners frequently act at cross-purposes to one another. Second, that HIV/AIDS education is an effective, albeit unintended, mechanism for keeping HIV-negative men outside the circle of gay community support and attention. And third, that despite the fact that neither education providers nor education clients appear satisfied with the situation, the current recursive dynamic between gay men and HIV/AIDS education efforts for gay men nonetheless serves to justify and reinforce this mechanism. This suggests an inherent stability of the status quo that will only be overcome through deliberate and thoughtful action on the part of institutional leaders and program planner/facilitators. The need to do so however can be found in an unintended irony. By helping to shape cultural decisions that exclude HIV-negative men from full membership in the gay community, program planners successfully reproduce the dynamic that gay men in general face in relation to the larger heterosexual society. As asserted above, this leaves HIV negative gay men feeling doubly excluded–an overwhelmingly hurtful experience for men who initially sought out the gay community precisely because they had spent a life time being the "other."

The findings also suggest some general implications for the practice of adult education. First, if education planners are to perform their role in a responsible fashion, they must begin by becoming aware of the relative priorities that have traditionally been assigned to the diverse interests that are affected by program planning. For example, if HIV/AIDS educators are to increase educational and societal attention to HIV-negative gay men, they first need to be aware of the reasons that that attention has been limited in the past. Second, adult educators who choose to alter a stable--even if ultimately unhealthy- - educational dynamic should be aware that they may face tremendous personal, professional, or societal obstacles to doing so. If these obstacles are too large, the status quo may hold regardless of how evident the need for change may be.

This study was important because lives are at stake. To the extent that adult educators believe education can affect behavior, each day brings new opportunities to help or fail uninfected gay men who wish to remain uninfected. This challenge has never been easy and past educational efforts may actually have made it more difficult. But as research into the prevention and management of HIV evolves, new social mores are emerging that drive the adoption or abandonment of individual behaviors and collective norms. The information provided by this study has the potential to help shape a more effective educational response to those evolving realities.

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Learners' Perspectives of the Train-the-Trainer Program in Creating the Role of Classroom Trainer

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Abstract: Learners in train-the-trainer courses typically are presented with prescriptive content, yet the classroom setting is dynamic. This study examined the meaning participants in three train-the-trainer programs gave to the role of classroom trainer.

Training is no longer the "invisible" educational system in the United States; rather, employer-based education is recognized as the largest delivery system of adult education today (Carnevale, 1989, p. 27). This phenomenon has led to interest in workplace learning and the creation of "learning organizations" (Senge, 1990; Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Moreover, organizations are downsizing, and many employees are assuming multiple roles. One role that employees undertake is that of non-professional or part-time trainer. Training interventions that prepare employees for this additional role are train-the-trainer courses. An important yet little understood question is the meaning the participants give to these courses. This study contributes to our knowledge of the teaching-learning transaction by examining (a) learning from the perspective of the learner and (b) the role of prior experience in learner development as trainer.

Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore new and experienced trainers' perspectives of the train-the-trainer process. The curriculum in train-the-trainer courses has been developed prescriptively; the development of lesson plans, methods for delivering material, techniques for asking questions, and "tips" for controlling participant behaviors are documented. The curriculum--what is taught and how this is taught--is explicit; what is learned by the participants is unknown. Thus, this study examined the meaning learners give to this training intervention and the role of learners' prior experience in learning to be a trainer.

Theoretical Framework

As the questions guiding this inquiry were questions of meaning, the theoretical orientation was phenomenological (Bogdan & Biklen, 1982). The fundamental assumption of this approach is that meaning is socially constructed, subject to negotiation, and "interpretation is essential" (p. 34). How do the learners interpret what a trainer "is" and "does"? Kolb defines learning as "the process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience" (1984, p. 38). How are learners transformed, if at all, in a train-the-trainer course? Previous experience provides "a repertoire of examples, images, understandings, and actions" (Schön, 1983, p. 138). What role, then, does experience play in learning to be a trainer? The theoretical work of Kolb (1984) and Schön (1983, 1987) contributed to the underpinnings of this study.

An examination of the literature indicated that this type of study had not been done in the training context of business and industry (Slusarski, 1998). This study, therefore, builds on these previous studies of the training of trainers in an organization and adds new understanding by examining the learners' perspectives of the train-the-trainer process in creating oneself in the role of trainer.

Research Design

The research questions guiding this study were: What meaning do people who are being trained to be trainers give to the training experience? What do new and experienced trainers claim to have learned? What role does the trainee's prior experience play? How, if at all, is the training environment gendered? How, if at all, does the trainee's perspective change over the course of the training process? We know what we teach in a formal sense (the curriculum); what is learned during the process is not known.

A qualitative case study methodology (Merriam, 1988) was used to explore the learners' perspectives from five train-the-trainer courses in three organizational settings--manufacturing, service, and governmental. I served as a participant observer in three different train-the-trainer programs (five classes) and then conducted follow-up interviews with participants and trainers.

Although each of the three courses involved some aspects of total quality management or quality service, the focus of this study was on the learner, not the quality content per se. Similarly, the instructional model used in the three train-the-trainer courses was influential but not a focus of this study. Although there are other models for teaching (e.g., Vella, 1994), the instructional model used in all three settings was essentially a transmission model or a prescriptive approach. Thus, the focus of this study was on the learners' perspectives of what actually took place in the train-the-trainer courses they experienced, rather than on the approach used or the quality content of the programs.

Data collection included extensive fieldnotes and memos from the 18 days of participant observation and 45 transcribed interviews of participants (36) and trainers (9). Analysis was performed using the constant comparative method (Glaser, 1978; Wiseman, 1974). After transcribing the data and coding the transcribed material, I used the software program HyperRESEARCH to assist in sorting the data. With this grounding in the data and after conducting multiple passes through the data, I analyzed the data for unique and overarching themes (Rubin & Rubin, 1995).

Description

The three organizations studied were representative (but not conclusive) of the variety of settings in which train-the-trainer courses are held. The manufacturing organization was an established fortune 500 company with a global market. The service industry was a growing company that provided accounting services for small businesses across the United States. The third organization--the county, a governmental organization, provided services for its rural, urban, and suburban areas. Although the organizations had similar hierarchical structures, each organization had different organizational goals and nuances, which made them significantly different in their organizational culture. In essence, each of the train-the-trainer programs was designed mainly to deliver information to the participants. The trainers in each of the settings were experienced trainers. The learners selected to attend the train-the-trainer training held either supervisory or staff positions. Some learners were new to the role of trainer; others were experienced trainers, either non-professional (training was an add-on to their job) or professional (training was their designated job). The organizations, the train-the-trainer courses, the trainers, and the learners provided a snapshot of the various settings where training occurs today.

Findings

The findings suggested seven unique themes: (a) understanding the purpose of training, (b) developing training skills and expertise, (c) idealizing the trainer models, (d) forming the self as trainer, (e) meeting the organization's expectations, (f) applying the training experience to the real world, and (g) learning with and from others (see Slusarski, 1998). The themes provided answers to the research questions.

What meaning did the train-the-trainer program have for these learners from the three settings studied? The learners described learning to be a trainer throughout the various themes, specifically within developing skills and expertise, defining the ideal trainer, and creating self as trainer. They recognized the organization's expectations and understood the purpose of training (as chosen by the organization). The learners were aware that the training they might conduct in the workplace would be similar yet different as they applied the information to their own "real world."

What role does the trainee's prior experience play? The participants in the train-the-trainer courses arrived in the classroom with varying degrees of experience and expertise in training. Some participants were novices and had no experience performing as a classroom trainer. Some desired to change jobs and work as trainers in the organization. Many had already conducted training classes within their organization as part (or all) of their job. A few participants were "moonlighters" who delivered training both part-time in their job as well as outside of the job, in paid or volunteer positions. As with many programs in adult education settings, the learners had varying levels of prior experience and knowledge on how to train in a classroom setting. Within the seven themes that emerged, the role of prior experience was evident.

How, if at all, is the training environment gendered? Issues of gender, race, and class were apparent in the three training environments studied; yet the issues remained "on the shelf" and unexplored by the learners. Similarly, in response to the research question--How, if at all, does the trainee's perspective change over the course of the training process?-- for most of the learners (with the exception of one participant), the trainees' perspectives were unchanged as the training process merely prepared them in the "how to" realm of training.

Conclusions

I suggest three conclusions as a result of the study: (a) participation in these train-the-trainer programs served to connect the learner to the organization; (b) the role of prior experience provided contrast between learners who enter a train-the-trainer program with little or no prior experience in training and those who enter the event with prior experience training; and (c) although the training events as designed provided experience in instrumental and communicative learning, there were few if any opportunities for the learners to experience transformational learning.

First, participating in the train-the-trainer program served to connect the learners to the organization. These learners bought into the corporate message. Meeting the trainers and the other participants from different parts of the organization gave the participants a "human" connection to the organization. This study in the three settings--manufacturing, service, and governmental--confirmed that the training setting serves as a platform and vehicle for learners to identify the organization's expectations, to understand the culture of the organization, and to continue a career path (Bowsher, 1989; Thayer, 1989).

A second conclusion suggested is the importance of the role of prior experience for new and experienced trainers in a train-the-trainer program. In a training program, a participant learns about (or more about) the self, the job, and the organization (Brookfield, 1986; Marsick, 1987). (In addition, by virtue of the classroom setting, the participants learn about others.) If we view the teaching learning transaction through the learners' lenses, particularly that of prior experience, two different patterns are suggested. The new trainer's focus is on self: developing confidence and comfort while recognizing the importance of credibility by learning content in the future. The trainer contributes to the new learner's concerns by offering support ("You can do it!") as well as content ("And here's how!). The focus of the experienced trainers, already possessing some level of confidence, comfort, and competence as a trainer (but this, too, may increase as a result of the learning experience), is on evaluating the trainer ("I do that already") and the techniques used in order to enhance their training style and competence ("Great idea!").

These two conclusions--connection to the organization and the role of prior experience--as suggested by the study contribute to our understanding of learning from the learners' perspective. However, there was a missing piece in the learner's experience; this was the opportunity for changes in perspective.

The organization's purpose in providing the train-the-trainer programs was to impart information, so that additional employees could serve as messengers for the organization. The participants' comments supported the success of the train-the-trainer programs in conveying the organizational messages and in preparing the participant for many of the components of conducting training (Bowsher, 1989; Powers, 1992). Thus, one goal was met. But, as Joyce and Showers (1988) recommend, developing employees should take into account two broad goals: "The first is to enable the students to learn information, skills, concepts and values that comprise the curriculum. *The second is to increase the students' ability to learn in the future*" (p. 3; italics added). As designed and delivered, the train-the-trainer programs studied met the first goal indicated by Joyce and Showers but not the second.

In examining the demands of the workplace today and in the future, it will not be enough to provide only "the rudiments of instructional skills" (Thomas, 1992, p. 170) to new trainers. Indeed, the efficacy of the trainer-as-messenger model has come into question (Senge, 1990; Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Organizations should address the use of a transmission model for training employees and consider developing a "thinking" employee, one capable of critical thinking and reflection (Brookfield, 1987; Mezirow & Associates, 1991; Schön, 1983, 1987). Trainers are in an ideal position to inspire, challenge, and engage participants in their classes in ways that will challenge their assumptions.

But, as some would question, does transformative learning *really* have a place in the work setting? No, not as the workplace is conceived of currently as a top-down management style. But even this picture is undergoing changes as organizations seek new ways to stay competitive and make a profit in a global marketplace (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; London, 1989). Perhaps the time is right for organizations to change the focus from *delivering* training to promoting *learning* in a training setting (Marsick, 1988) and consider other models of management such as a participatory model. Perhaps the time is right for organizations to consider the outcomes from its investment in training as moving beyond instilling skills through instrumental and communicative learning approaches and into the realm of developing employees and expanding human potential through transformative learning approaches (Mezirow, 1991). Of course, instrumental and communicative learning are valuable. But in our changing world, it may not be enough; rather, the ability to think critically and act will be prized.

Implications for Practice and Research

The implications for practice as suggested by this study address the design of training programs, the learners who train part-time, and the organization (Slusarski, 1998). How do we teach, as Schön suggests, "professional artistry" in addition to "practical competence" (1993, p. vii) in a train-the-trainer program? Designing train-the-trainer courses to include a performance component enhances learning. Learners may want to seek additional avenues for developing as trainers. Organizations may desire to re-think the paradigm they currently use for training their employees and consider whether this messenger paradigm is developing the critical thinkers required in a workplace characterized by rapid change.

The directions for future research as suggested by this study focus on learning in a classroom setting. First, in listening to the learners' perspectives, I was chagrined to hear how unsafe the classroom environment may be to learners, even though the "techniques" for creating safe environments for learning (Hiemstra, 1993) were evident. Is it the learners' perspective that the classroom is place to take risks and "make mistakes," or is the reality different? Re-examining the paradigm of classroom as a safe place to learn is suggested.

A second research area is the learners' concern for "saving face." During the interviews, both trainers and learners in these classroom settings discussed used various tactics to "save face" (Watkins & Marsick, 1993). Does "saving face" explain the "line of silence" that learners would not cross in response to some trainer questions? How, if at all, did the trainers use behaviors to enhance or diminish the learners' responses? How, if at all, does "saving face" relate to our human "need" or motivation of appearing competent (Wlodkowski & Ginsberg, 1996)? Questions such as these encourage further research on learning in the workplace with respect to the literature on face and facework (see, for example, Ting-Toomey, 1994).

A third area aligned with this study on learner perspectives is the expert-novice literature (see, for example, Chi, Glaser, & Farr, 1988 as cited in Merriam & Caffarella, 1991). This study indicated differences in perspective of learners with little or no prior experience and learners with experience as trainers. What would exploring the experts' perspectives, the trainers-of-trainers, add to our understanding of developing expertise as a trainer? How do trainers develop from novice to expert? We might even ask, are the terms "novice" and "expert" even applicable in a training setting? Does any adult enter a train-the-trainer program as a "true" novice?

The significance of this research was in examining the teaching-learning transaction from the learners' perspective. This study brought the learners' perspectives to the forefront of our understanding of the teaching-learning transaction, particularly the role that prior experience contributes in the meaning the learner gives to train-the-trainer program. Perhaps another contribution this research makes to the field of adult education is in examining the context of learning in organization, one of the greatest providers of adult education today.

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Does Basic Skills Education Work? Some Evidence from the National Adult Literacy Survey

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There are many education programs offerred for adult learners who need to improve their basic skills for reading, writing, and mathematics, including adult basic education, adult secondary education for high school dropouts (GED), and English-as-a-Second-Language classes. These programs are provided in a variety of settings, including the workplace and the community-at-large (e.g., libraries, community colleges, voluntary and social-service agencies). Generally, these programs are designed to help adults acquire and use literacy, or earn a diploma, and thereby, achieve personal goals, such as attaining gainful employment.

Educational attainment has been shown to contribute to the development of literacy in the general population--termed a literacy development effect (Reder, 1998). Because the demands for literacy increase exponentially as individuals proceed through school (Guthrie & Greaney, 1991), it is assumed that when individuals complete their schooling they are fully literate. Clearly, schooling not only drives the development of individuals' literacy skills, but also contributes to the kinds of reading practices in which they engage (e.g., reading books, periodicals, and documents for different purposes). From the primary grades on, students encounter many different texts, from basal readers to literature, and printed documents in and outside of school. Some students, of course, do not acquire sufficient literacy skills and practices, and leave school reading several years below grade level, or are unable to read at all. Eventually, many of these persons end up in adult basic skills programs to improve their literacy.

Programs' outcome assessments are typically based upon students' standardized test scores (e.g., the Test of Adult Basic Education). Test scores, however, do not adequately capture the complexity of adults' literacy skills and uses. Attainment of the GED is another widely-used criterion for literacy, but the GED Test is limited to a few knowledge areas and does not assess literacy skills or practices. Other evidence of students' literacy gains are offered by students and instructors through their testimonials of program or instructional efficacy (Beder, 1999; Dillon-Black, 1998), but anecdotal evidence cannot be generalized to the basic skills population.

Generally, most adults participate voluntarily in adult education, although in some cases individuals are required to enroll in basic skills classes. Fewer than ten percent of eligible adults actually take part in any of the basic skills programs that are offerred, however (Pugsley, 1990). Researchers have investigated the reasons underlying adults' reluctance to enroll in adult education. Often, these reasons pertain to perceived barriers to education, such as the time required and economic and personal costs (Darkenwald, Kim, & Stowe, 1998) and lack of self-confidence, and personal problems such Norman, 1996; Ziegahn, 1992). It is much less certain that adults actually increase their literacy skills as a result of basic skills education.

Good literacy instruction should provide many opportunities for adults to practice their literacy skills both in and out of class. All too often, however, instruction is limited to workbook assignments containing drill-and-skill activities having little connection to literacy outside of the classroom (Solorzano, Stecher, & Perez, 1989). Studies examining the effects of literacy instruction on the development of adults' reading practices are rare. There is evidence that reading instruction influences students' reading practices, but these studies have pertained to school-age children (Cline & Kretke, 1980; Collins, 1980; Elley & Mangubhai, 1983; Ingham, 1981), not low-literate adults having negative educational experiences.

The findings from several empirical investigations of basic skills programs, and the measured improvements in adults' literacy skills and practices following participation in these programs, are inconclusive. Friedlander and Martinson (1996) used a randomized experimental design to estimate the effects of a basic education program on adults' literaNorman, 1996; Ziegahn, 1992). It is much less certain that adults actually increase their literacy skills as a result of basic skills education.

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The findings from several empirical investigations of basic skills programs, and the measured improvements in adults' literacy skills and practices following participation in these programs, are inconclusive. Friedlander and Martinson (1996) used a randomized experimental design to estimate the effects of a basic education program on adults' literacy achievement. Data were gathered on participants in California's Greater Avenues for Independence (GAIN) program. Enrollees were randomly assigned to a program or control group. Standardized literacy achievement test data showed no group differences following instruction. Venezky, Bristow, and Sabatini (1994) studied enrollees and dropouts from adult literacy classes over one school year. Significant growth was found in functional literacy, but there were no gains in basic reading (i.e., comprehension and vocabulary), and declines were observed in quantitative literacy.

We recently completed a study (Sheehan & Smith, in press) using data from the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS), to investigate the associations of participation in basic skills education to literacy skills and reading practices. While the results of our investigation are correlational, we employed the most sophisticated data analysis methods possible to ascertain the possible effects of participation on adults' literacy. The NALS is the largest study of adults' literacy ever conducted in the United States. Data were gathered on a nationally representative sample of more than 26,000 adults, ages 16 and older, in 1992. Participants completed both a literacy assessment and a background interview that obtained information on demographic variables, labor force and civic participation, and literacy practices. The literacy assessment measured adults' abilities to read, understand, and use information in prose, documents, and quantitative materials.

We focused only on respondents who reported having participated in basic skills (e.g., reading, writing, and arithmetic) programs at some time prior to, or concurrent with, their completion of the NALS assessment (ten percent of the NALS sample). Because of the ex post facto nature of the design, we employed a set of control variables (e.g., educational attainment, age, race, labor force participation, primary home language) to account for the selection bias in the study (i.e., those in basic skills programs are more likely to have low skills upon entry than nonparticipants). The control variables served as a proxy for literacy skills prior to entering a basic skills program. Because the three NALS literacy scales are highly intercorrelated (Reder, 1998), we focused only on the prose scale. We also created five reading practices scores for each type of reading material (i.e., newspapers, magazines, books, personal documents, work documents) that respondents reported reading on the background survey, and examined the associations of these practices to basic skills participation.

Hierarchical linear modeling (HLM) was used as the data analysis technique, because it provides accurate estimates of relationships among variables in cluster-sampled surveys like the NALS. The NALS method used geographic regions called probability sampling units (PSUs) in which groups of neighborhoods, households and individuals were randomly selected. HLM allows random variations in literacy skills and practices due to "neighborhoods," (or any other sampled unit) to be accounted for when examining relationships among the variables.

Our findings showed that there were no significant differences in prose literacy between basic skills participants and nonparticipants, but participants read significantly more materials for four of the five reading practices. Only newspaper reading was unrelated to participation.

Conclusions and Implications for Adult Education

Although studies have demonstrated gains for some specific literacy skills (Venezky et al., 1994), and others have documented adults' attainment of tangible indicators of functional literacy, such as the GED (Darkenwald & Valentine, 1985; Friedlander et al., 1996; Smith & Locke, in press), the research to date does not indicate that there is any effect of adult basic skills education on literacy skills (Beder, 1999). The results of our study also support these findings. Several studies have shown, however, that basic skills programs can impact participants' attitudes, lifestyles, and behaviors such as reading practices (Fitzsimmons, 1991; Malicky & Norman, 1996; Stanfel, 1996). This leads us to ask, "Is it sufficient for adult basic education to change attitudes and behaviors but not participants' general literacy skills?".

Beder (1991) suggests that a goal of adult literacy programs is to achieve the larger social benefit of a nation of individuals whose lives are improved through increased literacy. Clearly then, a critical evaluation of adult basic education programs is warranted because research findings do not support the claim that these programs lead to improved literacy. This may not be a reasonable goal, however, in the current landscape of adult education. Because adults often set their own learning goals and enter and exit programs as they choose (Venezky et al., 1997), it is difficult to ensure that all participants receive instruction that is sufficient to improve their literacy skills.

Recently, adult literacy researchers have suggested shifting basic education from a model emphasizing literacy instruction for all, to a personalized model in which learning is situated in social contexts (Lankshear & O'Connor, 1999; Wagner & Venezky, 1999). The proposed model envisions learners engaged in real-life literacy tasks, rather than decontextualized skills, and instruction tailored to individual goals. Such a model is not without its problems, however. Unless instruction is centralized, program coordination may be too complex. Further, program evaluations become more difficult, requiring adoption of criterion-referenced assessment tools rather than standardized tests, and such changes may weaken accountability. These issues should not drive the instructional design, however. Adult basic skills education must be modeled on current research that demonstrates how adults can best achieve full functional literacy.

Empowerment of Rural Zulu Women through Popular Adult Education in South Africa: A Case Study of the National Association for Women's Empowerment (NAWE) Program in KwaZulu-Natal

Zilungile Sosibo

Abstract: This paper reports the study on grassroots Zulu women in the NAWE program. The purpose was to investigate whether the women were empowered. The research question was: Are the women empowered, if so, in what ways and how do they define empowerment? Methods of data collection included interviews, participant observation, and document analysis.

Introduction

Empowerment is a buzzword in the discourse of women and development, Adult Education, and Feminist Scholarship. However, theories of this concept in the existing literature are fragmentary and lack a cohesive structure to give a clear definition of what empowerment means. This paper argues that a bottom-up approach that involves learners in determining what empowerment means and how it could be attained maximizes opportunities for developing a more precise model of empowerment. This paper comprises the final section of the case study that was conducted on grassroots Zulu women who participated in the National Association for Women's Empowerment program (NAWE) in South Africa. The goal of the study was to investigate whether the grassroots women were empowered. The research question was: Are the women in the NAWE program empowered, if so, in what ways? How do they define empowerment? What factors promote or limit their empowerment?

Methods of Data Collection

The research design was an instrumental case study (Stake, 1995; Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). Methods of data collection included semi-structured, open-ended interviews (Stake, 1995; Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) with sixty five women, participant observation (Reinharz, 1992; Fetterman, 1989), and document analysis. Data analysis involved grouping and developing categories out of emerging themes (Tesch, 1990; Marshall and Rossman, 1989). These themes later became chapters of the dissertation.

Findings of the Study

The findings revealed that factors of race, gender, and class intersected and fed on each other to oppress the participants in the NAWE program. The women and leaders identified five roots of oppression, the feminization of poverty; domination, exploitation, and marginalization; educational deprivation; violence; and cultural oppression. They also identified five paths to empowerment. However, the views of the women and leaders differed with regard to how poverty and cultural oppression were to be addressed. The perceptions on empowerment by the women and leaders also differed.

Alleviating Poverty

The escalating rates of poverty among the women, in particular black women in South Africa has been documented (Department of Welfare, 1996a; The World Bank, 1994).

According to the report by the Department of Welfare (1996a), there is a link between the growth of poverty and the vast number of 67 percent of poor female-headed families in KwaZulu-Natal. Many women in this study believed that the sources of their poverty were migrant labor, widowhood and unemployment, and polygamy. Some women narrated how as single heads of families they struggled to make ends meet. On the other hand, the leaders believed that the source of women's poverty was lack of access to mainstream economy.

Empowerment. It was the belief of all the women that learning income-generation skills enabled them to gain money that in turn alleviated their poverty. Consequently, the women engaged in activities such as sewing, shoemaking, crafts, soap-making, candle-making, and floor polish-making. Although these skills were meant for generating income, the women said they also found them useful in fulfilling their household roles. The women asserted that the income they generated enabled them to provide for the needs of their families. For other women, gaining income brought with it changes in their economic status as they became self-sufficient. For the women whose spouses were working, the income they gained supplemented that from their husbands and also freed them from dependency on men. Although the leaders agreed with the women that income generation skills alleviated poverty, they also thought that women's access to mainstream economy was the solution to their poverty. Hence, they lobbied for bank loans that had prevalently been unavailable to poor women during the apartheid era. The leaders attested to two forms of transformation that they saw in the women. One was reversal of traditional roles between women and their spouses and children. Another transformation was economic independence and autonomy that the leaders said allowed the women to make informed decisions about their income.

The women, on the one hand, identified four obstacles to their empowerment. One was prejudice by society, which the women argued was reflected in the way that the society, in particular men, looked down upon their work. Men's superego made them to be reluctant to purchase clothing from the poor rural women. Lack of infrastructure where the women would sell their work meant that the women had to spend time selling their work from house to house or on the streets when they should be attending the program. Lack of financial resources to purchase equipment and materials was another obstacle to women's income-making business. Household drudgeries such as plowing fields, collecting firewood and water, and caring for the children and the elderly hindered the women's progress. On the other hand, the leaders identified patriarchy and cultural stereotypes as playing a significant role in domesticating the women. They argued that some women were still tied to traditional norms that required them to give their income to their spouses who had to decide how it had to be spent. Like the women, the leaders also perceived lack of funding as a big obstacle to women's empowerment.

Addressing Domination, Exploitation, and Marginalization

The women attributed domination, exploitation, and marginalization to factors of race, class, and gender. Racial domination manifested itself in the way that some Indian and white businessmen dominated the business of sewing school uniform for black children, a business that the women believed rightfully belonged to them. The women also complained that some black school principals colluded with Indian businessmen by accepting bribes of cheap dress suits and by forcing black students to wear expensive factory-made school uniforms. The director of the program, on the other hand, used her class advantage in exploiting the poor women. She bought bulk beads and asked the grassroots women to make beadwork for her that she later sold in Europe at a high cost. She also bought the women's crafts cheaper and sold them in Europe at exorbitant prices.

Patriarchal hegemony manifested itself in three ways: some men made it difficult for the women to go to the learning program by making unreasonable demands; others deliberately and without consent wore the clothes that were meant for generating income; and internalized oppression made some in-laws and women in the community to collude with men in looking down and criticizing the participants. The women felt that the attitudes of the society had to change.

Empowerment. Both the women and leaders agreed that the women's collective action on demanding sewing contracts from black school principals eliminated their exploitation. They also agreed that refining the women's sewing skills had allowed the women to compete with their Indian and white business counterparts. Also, the women felt that engaging in entrepreneurship and in non-traditional activities such as shoemaking, which they said were both traditionally appropriate to men, empowered them. They also strengthened their women-only program with the belief that by excluding men, they were avoiding potential domination by men. As a result of the changes that had occurred in their lives, the women began to perceive themselves as agents of transformation. They said that learning in the program emancipated them from performing all the household tasks. Being away from home during the day had taught their children and husbands to do things on their own. The women also attested to their superiority to men and said that acquisition of traditionally male-appropriate skills had set them far beyond men.

In spite of their accomplishments, the women still felt that men were acting as gatekeepers especially in the sphere of entrepreneurship. Men were still in charge of controlling resources everywhere, in financial institutions, in the offices of the donor agencies, and in the local government, which made it difficult for the women to obtain resources that they had hoped would maximize their efficiency in running their businesses. Gender stereotyping was still prevalent among the Zulu society, as was shown by how some men, in-laws, and other women in the community treated the participants.

Redressing Educational Deprivation

Both the women and leaders agreed that gender, race, and class played a tremendous role in fundamentally depriving the women of educational opportunities that would develop their life skills. Three reasons accounted for this lack of education by the women: negative societal stereotypes about educating women, low socioeconomic class, and racist apartheid laws which prohibited some women from attending white neighboring schools.

Empowerment. The program redressed the women's lack of skills by providing instruction on these areas: basic healthcare, AIDS, and nutrition. The women asserted that the skills that they learned enhanced their self-esteem and helped them discover themselves and their potentialities. However, the women were concerned that the program did not provide instruction on the 3 R's, which they believed were essential to their empowerment.

The women complained about irrelevancy of some skills that they had acquired. For example, because of lack of skills they could not read the recipe book of traditional meals toward which they had made significant contributions. Lack of participation in curriculum policy-making prevented them from expressing their aspirations, such as their wish to learn the 3R's.

Addressing the Problem of Violence

The prevalence of violence against South African women has been widely documented (Wakin, 1999; Agenda Focus, 1994). It is important to understand violence against women in terms of the broader South African societal context in which a culture of violence is overwhelmingly high and in which violence against women is sanctioned by a sexist and patriarchal society. An estimated one million women are abused by men in KwaZulu-Natal in a year (Padayachee & Manjoo, 1996). The South African Crisis Centre in Esikhawini where this study was conducted reports that approximately 150 cases of domestic violence were reported between September and December of 1995. A woman is raped every 83 seconds in South Africa and that black women are particularly vulnerable to rape and abuse (The Agenda Focus, 1994). The participants in the NAWE program were no exception to all these forms of violence.

Empowerment. As an attempt to combat and raise awareness about violence against women, the grassroots women ingrained anti-violence messages on beaded necklaces, waistbands, and headbands. One of the messages that caught my eye was written in Xhosa, one of the native languages in South Africa. The message read, *"indoda okwenyani ayimbethi umkayo,"* which meant "a true man does not beat up his wife." Another group of women performed theater that raised the women's awareness about domestic violence. The leaders invited progressive leaders who raised women's consciousness on issues of rape and incest through storytelling. The women said that storytelling helped them to gain emotional and psychological stability and healing. They also stated that consciousness raising activities and methods developed their critical thinking skills. However, the women rejected the content of the theater about domestic violence because they felt that it was negatively stereotyping Zulu men.

Because the women learned these consciousness raising activities at a one-time annual workshop and not regularly in their respective groups, they felt that one-time events were not adequate to bring about transformation. Follow-up sessions were recommended for future program activities.

Eliminating Cultural Oppression

The views of women and leaders differed on the causes of cultural oppression. While the women were concerned about the contamination of the Zulu culture by western influences, the leaders felt that the Zulu culture domesticated and oppressed the women. The leaders criticized the custom of *lobolo* or bride price, for disempowering the women. They also thought that the sexist Zulu culture devalued women and their work. On the contrary, the women thought that the Zulu traditions such as *umhlanga*[1] and *ukuqomisa*[2] were their pride that had to be preserved.

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[1] An annual Zulu reed dance whereby the Zulu maidens parade in front of the Zulu nation, showing off and taking pride in their virginity. It is usually during this ceremony that the Zulu king selects a young woman to be one of his wives.

[2] The tradition of Courting among the Zulus

Empowerment. The women believed that preservation of the Zulu tradition was empowering. They reinforced their culture by singing traditional Zulu songs, by performing Zulu dance, and also by cultural concerts in which they paraded and showed off traditional Zulu attire. The women also revitalized the lost Zulu tradition of mentoring young women through their coming of age. The leaders, on the other hand, believed that modernizing the women was the best way of empowering them. Hence, the leaders taught the women about their rights. The women attested to attitude change as a result of the knowledge they had learned about their rights.

Although the women believed that knowing about their rights was empowering, the sexist attitudes of the society prohibited them from exercising their rights in their homes and in public. Another problem was that some women did not believe in the existence of women's rights.

Other Mediating and Mitigating Factors on Empowerment

Non-Participatory Participation. During the selection of one district committee, as participant observer I was designated a task of counting the ballots. When the woman whom the leaders had targeted for winning the deputy chair lost the vote, the leaders called me aside and ordered me to swop the names so that their favorite women would get the position. This incident showed the powerlessness of the women in the face of injustices and inequalities. The women's participation in the selection process was practically non-participatory. Also, the hierarchical top-down structure of the program limits the women's participation in curriculum and policy-making decisions. These powers are vested in the executive committee.

Collective Empowerment. The women believed in collective empowerment and emphasized that working as a team had generated solidarity and positive interrelationships among them. Their spirituality manifested itself in their song "*ngiboleke imbokodo ngigaye ubuvila bami*," which means "lend me a boulder so that I can grind my laziness." The women said this song invoked a communal spirit and fueled them to work harder. They also sang it in lieu or in preparation for a prayer. The women agreed that singing kept them going and bound them together as a community of women.

Lack of Knowledge as a Form of Bureaucracy. The findings revealed that the women only knew the acronym and not the full title of their organization. They also did not know the goals and mission statement of the program even though the constitution was available in both English and their vernacular. The interpretation of the acronym had no relation to the meaning of empowerment. However, all the members of the mother body knew everything concerning the program.

Conclusion

The grassroots women asserted that they were empowered because they had gained subsistence income that enabled them to maintain their families. They also acquired a sense of self-sufficiency which they said eliminated their dependency. By taking collective action against racial, gender, and class hegemony, the women felt empowered. Engaging in entrepreneurship and in skills that are traditionally appropriate to men developed a positive self-esteem and liberated the women from the domestic sphere. Discovering individual potentialities and mobilizing against violence on women was also fulfilling. Being able to protect their Zulu culture also empowered the women. The leaders perceived reversal of traditional roles between women and men as a determinant of empowerment.

However, the collision of the meaning of empowerment between the women and leaders raises concerns about the elusiveness of the definition of empowerment. What the women perceive as empowerment is sometimes seen by the leaders as disempowerment and vice versa. This collision of meaning shows lack of collaboration and the absence of negotiation of the meaning of empowerment by the women and leaders. This situation is not uncommon in Adult Education and Women's Studies programs where adult educators, in their attempt to 'empower' the learners, sometimes disempower them by criticizing cultural, religious, or ethnic values that are of utmost significance to the learners. To avoid ambiguities and contradictions in the definitions of empowerment, it is vital that program leaders and educators of adults and women take time to step back and let the learners define empowerment on their own.

Whether empowerment is working in the NAWE program is also not clear. The women perceive the program as a hiding place from the domesticating household chores. This means they still unquestioningly accept the domestic sphere as their rightful domain. They still accept the division of labor among women and men as normal, and not as a sphere that women have to share with men. It is also questionable whether empowerment can be defined in terms of acquisition of income without analyzing the interactions and interrelationships under which income is obtained. The bureaucratic, top-down structure of the program undermines the significance of democracy and the contemporary view of bottom-up approach to development.

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Poor Women's Education Under Welfare Reform

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Abstract: This paper reports the effects welfare reform has on the educational development of 48 single mothers in the Midwest. Findings indicate academic tracking into low skill vocational training programs, the lack of knowledge women have about their rights under Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF), and factors which contribute to low educational attainment.

Introduction

Shuffled from one set of expectations, which encouraged education, work, and family life to a set of expectations that focuses on work first, quick fixes for employability, and severe sanctions which penalize families, single mothers under the new welfare reform have little or no say in how they would like their lives to proceed. They are mandated and regulated to find work within a two year period when most recipients have neither the educational background necessary to secure living wage jobs nor find themselves in communities that have low skill jobs that will support families without some supplemental assistance.

Under the reform statutes education and training are exclusively targeted to assisting women in becoming "employable" in order to remove them from the welfare system. Simultaneously, the personal, cultural and political aspects of women's lives have been eliminated from educational consideration. This paper reports findings from twenty four hours of small group discussions with 48 single mothers on welfare investigating the influence welfare reform has had on their educational development. Dewey tells us in studying education to study experience since education, experience and life are intertwined while Lindeman contends that education is life.

Literature

Poor women's educational attainment levels are disproportionately low (Barton & Jenkins, 1995), and there is overwhelming evidence of the strong correlation between educational credentials and wage labor rewards (Lerman, September 1997). The link between low levels of education and poverty would seem to call for putting more resources into educational opportunities for welfare women. To hammer home the message that education equals employment the U.S. Department of Labor now breaks down joblessness by educational attainment. Despite these findings, the welfare reform movement denies recipients educational opportunities beyond short term education or training programs while espousing self-sufficiency.

Gwendolyn Mink (1998) contends that the new welfare law stratifies women's rights of vocational freedom under the Thirteenth Amendment, freedom from coerced labor. She further states that the change in policy disables women's citizenship. Both of these rights are central to the purposes of education. The Work First theme of the reform solidifies poor women's place as dependent citizens.

Women's educational development exists within the larger structures of society and the contextual realities of lived experiences. Mimi Abramovitz (1996), as well as others, critique of the gendered nature of the welfare state points to the contradictory relationship between the welfare state and the dynamics of capitalism and patriarchy. The forces of patriarchy which demand women's unpaid labor in the home keeps them from competing with men for better paying jobs and jobs with more responsibility while the demands of capitalism require a flexible pool of workers who can be pulled into the labor market as needed to keep wages and labor costs down.

Some contend that patriarchal authority and the "family ethic" are stronger than the economic imperatives thus suggesting women must be kept in their place; for poor women that means the place at the bottom of the well. Women who sign contracts under the Personal Responsibility Act (PRA) loose control of their right to choose education and/or training programs that will provide them with the chance to move out of poverty and secure a living wage yet education is the prerequisite for improvement in women's status.

Model of Inquiry

A collaborative research model, designed to engage welfare women in reflective dialogue about their most pressing problems under the reform, was used to collect their stories to more fully understand the effects of welfare reform. By going directly to the women who are impacted by the welfare reform measures I hoped to uncover first-hand information situated in subjectivities, lived experiences, and feelings about those experiences. Small groups of African American, Latina, biracial, and Anglo women, between the ages of 18 and 38, met in two urban and rural communities in Nebraska. They represent some of the diverse faces and circumstances of welfare mothers. Discussions were conducted at a job readiness program sponsored by a community based organization (9 sessions), a community college transition program (3 sessions), and an African American cultural community center (2 sessions) over a period of 16 months to determine what concerns and problems women have regarding TANF. Topics discussed ranged from how they negotiated TANF contracts, time limits, difficult caseworkers, education programs, job readiness and training, childcare dilemmas, to family sanctions. Other concerns emerged from the dialogue such as racial discrimination, and rights and responsibilities under the new social policy.

Several informal meetings with TANF caseworkers were also held to get their perspectives about the education options and work requirements under the new law.

Educational Stratification

Poor women's education for economic development is laid out under the TANF system. Recipients must engage in employment, job search, unpaid work experience, job skills training, and/or approved education for no more than one year with the goal of removing needy families from government support. Recipients have two year's to become self-sufficient. Findings report the educational stratification that poor single mothers are experiencing.

Academic Tracking. Women recounted academic tracking into low skilled job training that will not lead to living wage jobs rather than degree programs which are the surest way out of poverty. There is a lack of choice in career direction, selecting educational/training programs, as well as being discouraged from being self-directed. Many reported being pushed out of education into short term training, harassed by impossible compliance, and sanctioned if program attendance is not kept up to the required number of hours each week.

Marie was told by her caseworker she already had employability skills, office filing, so she must find a job even though Marie could not make enough to support herself and her two children. Joyce, recently divorced, was told she was too old, at 38, to begin an educational program and she could not use the full two years to attend school. She was told she could take a computer course since she could not return to factory production because of the physical abuse she sustained from her husband. Sarah was told that more education would not necessarily help her make more money anyway and she needed to just go out and find a job. Tara was enrolled in a GED program and job search even though she had not worked previously. Jackie had to hold down two part time jobs if she wanted to continue her program in child development in order to satisfy her caseworker's demand that she had to work. Heather started a vocational program in cooking but once enrolled knew she did not like it; when asked why she didn't change programs she told the group her caseworker wouldn't let her use more than 12 months for training and she would lose the year she already had in food preparation. Vanessa was given the option of one of two 12 month certificate programs in healthcare which still had openings that she could get into right away, even though this was in a job area Vanessa had no interest.

Sarah made it through a two year degree and was working on finishing her bachelors degree when TANF went into effect. She had been receiving assistance for several years as a young mother. Since education does not qualify towards work under TANF Sarah had to find a part time job in order to stay in school. Sarah was working twenty hours, carrying seventeen credit hours plus trying to raise her daughter by herself with no relatives nearby.

Jolene was not so lucky as to be able to stay in school. Jolene was enrolled in college and working towards a bachelors degree when she signed her TANF contract. She, however, was given no option to add work to education. Instead she was required to drop out of school, attend a computer skill upgrade course, and find work since she had "employable skills". As long as she was working she got assistance with child care for her two young children and help with transportation. If she had stayed in school she would not have received either child care or transportation assistance.

Women are being tracked into narrowly defined educational programs, programs that are short term, primarily service oriented, and into positions that will not give them a living wage. Equally problematic is the lack of choice women have over their future vocation. While middle class women are encouraged to follow their interests poor women are told what choices they have, like it or not. At the same time, many women are being directed into and prepared for job fields where there are no positions in the local economies. One woman told of how she had called numerous medical clinics in surrounding rural communities to see if she could find a job as a medical receptionist without any luck, yet she was mandated into a 6 month program by her caseworker because the program had slots open.

According to caseworkers, recipients have educational options. According to caseworkers, recipients go through an assessment process which identifies their academic skill levels and assists in education placement. According to recipients, there is no choice to enter a two year or four year degree program, nor the option to explore the varied vocational programs offered by the community colleges or other agencies. According to recipients, they do not have the choice of using the full two years for GED preparation or postsecondary education.

Education for economic development is not benefiting the women who must become self sufficient. Lack of choice and academic tracking results in educational stratification whereby poor women do not have the same access, opportunities, and life chances as other women in society.

Education for Political Engagement. Education for political development is often informal, with information passing from one individual to another, or nonformally through community sponsored workshops or discussion groups. Stories told by the women point to the lack of knowledge recipients generally have regarding their TANF contracts, their rights and benefits under TANF, and the appeal process. How is it that women who are held accountable for their every action under a state contract do not know what their rights are under the law? Poor women's civic and political education has been underdeveloped thus allowing the state to intimidate and coerce recipients who unwittingly comply to mandates without full knowledge of their rights. They are made aware of their responsibilities and the sanctions for noncompliance under TANF but only receive information about their rights if they raise questions, and in some cases, only through public advocates.

The vast majority of women in this study did not have a copy of their contract, many did not know what the conditions of the contract were except in broad terms, and for those who did have copies most did not know where the contract was, it had been misplaced. Of the 48 women only two knew all the conditions of their contracts and where they had put them for future reference. Both women were finishing four year degrees started under the old ADC program. Janet, on the other hand, knew what was in her contract but her caseworker had only developed activities for six months. Janet was told to take care of her health, get her teeth fixed, get mental health assistance and attend a computer course. She was worried and anxious about what was going to happen next. Janet had never been on welfare before.

All talked of not knowing what services and support they were entitled to under TANF. In many cases, caseworkers would not offer the various support services unless the recipient specifically asked if she was eligible. During the talk sessions women would tell of their experiences with caseworkers and how they handled specific situations giving other women support to go back to their caseworkers and request benefits or explanations for denial. Dialogue about contracts, caseworkers, benefits, and negotiation processes assisted women in seeing alternative attitudes and approaches to maneuvering through the system. Women were educating themselves.

During the talk sessions it became obvious that most women did not know what recourse they had under the contracts. Contracts are legally binding agreements between, at least two parties, in this case the individual and the state, yet the women did not think of the contract in those terms. Rather they only knew of their obligations under the agreement. As they reflected on the concept of contracts their political awareness heightened. Some women wanted to know how to file a class action suit against the state, others asked if letters to the legislature would help to change things, still others wanted to know how to build a community of welfare recipients in order to build solidarity. All were eager to learn about the appeal and grievance procedures.

Awakening women's political consciousness is an educational process that often occurs in school but is not available under TANF to poor single mothers on welfare.

Low Educational Attainment

The academic tracking and the lack of education for political engagement point to some factors influencing the low level of educational attainment by poor women and are illustrated in the narratives of the women. Being coerced to enroll in education or training programs that are not of one's choice is probably the biggest concern. Many women told of being directed to chose between two or three certificate programs. This illusion of choice maintains control over women. The lack of opportunity to investigate various career options, taken for granted by the middle class, is denied women on welfare because of the ticking clock. Advocates counsel women not to sign their contracts until they have made a decision about what direction they want to go, however, not every woman knows the kind of work she wants to do and benefits begin with the signing of the TANF contract not while one is contemplating career options.

The struggles of parenting alone are commonly known and are documented in this study, yet, despite federal spending there is a tremendous shortage of quality public childcare. Single mothers' educational attainment cannot be separated from their concerns about the quality of childcare and the triple demands of mother, worker, and student. While some single mothers have family to help them with childcare, the majority get only emotional support because of the low wages of extended family members. Some women reported lack of childcare within walking distance to their homes making it difficult for those using public transportation to place their child in a safe environment while they attend training, education, or job readiness programs.

There is an extra burden placed on recipient students who are impoverished, with families to care for, inadequate transportation, and the demands of coursework and homework. Nancy told of her daily schedule which begins at 5:00 AM in order to get her daughter ready for daycare and herself to class by 8:00 AM. Nancy and her daughter live 30 miles from the community college where she attends a restaurant management program. Under TANF she must pick up her daughter from daycare in-between classes and then return her to daycare in time for the next class. This schedule has Nancy running back and forth between the college and the daycare center leaving Nancy to find places where they can go since their home is 30 miles away.

Women perceive that the general public does not understand what it means to be poor and a single mother thus compounding the struggles of being on welfare. Several women also reported the lack of understanding by family members. Scrutinized by the public in grocery store lines when food stamps are used to family members complaining that nobody pays their rent pressures single mother/students to "downsize their dreams", setting aside studies they hoped would lead them to promising career tracks in order to take whatever work they could find at the moment because they cannot handle the burden (Pierre, December, 1997).

The lack of living wage jobs is, certainly, a disincentive for education. In Nebraska "a single mother with two children needs gross earnings of $22,000 a year to be economically self-sufficient. That income requires a full time job paying more than $10.00 per hour, twice the minimum wage" (Funk, February 1998, p. 3). Funk further states that we are likely to promote "working-poverty" rather than economic self-sufficiency. In Wisconsin the percentage of low skill jobs would leave two out of three jobseekers with no job. "There are 73 low skill jobseekers for every living wage entry level job in the state" (Institute for Wisconsin's Future, 1998, p. 3).

The illusion of choice, the concern over convenient quality childcare, the burden of single parenting, the lack of public and family understanding of poverty, and the lack of living wage jobs all contribute to the low educational attainment of poor women.

Conclusions

Poor women's education under welfare reform in this historical moment is reflective of the recurring problematics of gender, race, and class in contemporary U.S. society. The educational stratification and academic tracking of poor women, the overemphasis on education for work only, and the masking of people's civil and political rights point to some of the institutionalized injustices manifesting under the welfare reform and must be investigated more fully. People have been fighting against exclusionary educational practices for many years: the struggle continues.

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The Role of Language in the Preservation of a Culture

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Introduction

A major concern exists in tribal communities for the preservation of the native language and culture. For many generations, tribal people have relied on the traditional educational system to support their future. Through this educational process, the family role of transmitting tribal knowledge has been severely weakened as formal educational institutions do not transmit tribal knowledge, language, or cultural elements as part of their learning process. Since the public schools are not supporting the cultural and language needs of the tribe, the responsibility rests on community programs to provide alternative opportunities of tribal holistic learning for tribal ways.

This problem is especially acute on the Blackfeet Reservation. The Blackfeet Reservation is the largest in population of Montana's seven reservations and has been one of the most traditional in the practice of cultural beliefs and events. However, as with most tribal communities in the United States, the Blackfeet community has found that its language is in danger of being lost. The lost of the complete unique culture always accompanies the lost of the language.

On the Blackfeet Indian Reservation today, Western education is highly valued but seldom attained. At the same time the family role of transmitting tribal knowledge has been severely weakened. The formal educational institutions do not transmit Blackfeet knowledge of language, history, and cultural elements as part of their learning process. The Blackfeet people value their tribal language and traditional ways. Public schools are not supporting the cultural and language needs of the tribe. This responsibility rests on community programs to design, develop, and provide alternative opportunities of tribal holistic learning for tribal ways. The Blackfeet Community College is one of few institutions of learning where there has been a serious attempt to incorporate community and tribal ideals. The tribal college is still struggling with this attempt.

There is no documented evidence that the elders of the tribe have been included in giving input, ideas, and recommendations toward the transfer of tribal knowledge. On occasion, a group of elders has been interviewed to share their educational experience and viewpoints as they reflect back on their lives. Tribal knowledge consists of Blackfeet philosophy, religious concepts, traditions, customs, and language. Language and culture are inseparable; therefore, language needs to be the medium for learning and acquiring tribal knowledge. The problem of teaching the Blackfeet language in formal school settings is almost non-existent or acceptable.

The viewpoint of the elders is the link to tribal knowing. Educational institutions have neglected to teach Blackfeet cultural elements, and the views of the elders have not been incorporated into these systems. Thus, this traditional knowing is excluded from the current educational system and is in danger of being lost to the tribe.

Purpose and Design

The purpose of this study was to describe the perceptions of selected Blackfeet elders (a) concerning what constitutes the traditional Blackfeet knowledge base and (b) concerning how they believe this knowledge base should be passed on through the various formal and informal institutions that exist in the Blackfeet community. The design utilized the model of Rowland (1994) who chronicled support for the notion that education can transmit tribal culture for future generations by incorporating Cheyenne philosophy and beliefs into the present Cheyenne reservation educational system. Consequently, this research offers a way for minority groups to do participatory research to better understand the philosophical foundations which make their group unique.

Following the model of the Rowland study with the Northern Cheyenne, 20 elders were interviewed in this qualitative descriptive study. The interviews were conducted in Blackfeet in order to preserve the rich context of the language. By means of in-depth, personal interviews, the following research questions were addressed: (1) What are the Blackfeet concepts of wisdom and knowledge? (2) What are the characteristics of Blackfeet teachers and students? (3) How does a person learn the Blackfeet culture? (4) How does a person learn in the Blackfeet culture? (5) How are the Blackfeet ways passed on in the culture? (6) How important is the language in transmitting Blackfeet knowledge? and (7) What roles should various community institutions be playing in passing on the Blackfeet Way-of-Knowing?

Findings

The elders of the community wanted to share their thoughts and knowledge with hopes of getting a message across to the community. The interviews were done in the Blackfeet language and translated back to English to give the elders every opportunity to feel comfortable in responding to a semi-structured interview process. A team approach to conducting the interview was used. The team included the researcher, a recorder to run the video camera, and a translator who was a speaker of the language. The researcher presented questions in English, and the translator repeated the questions in Blackfoot.

The data from the interviews grouped into the categories of Blackfeet life, family relationships, names, ceremonies, language, education, and transferring of knowledge. The perceptions of the elders as described through the Blackfoot language revealed overwhelming, comprehensive, and rich reflections on families, schooling, and community. The elders reflected on their experiences, mostly when they were young and with their parents. The elders shared the socializing of long visits, singing, and dancing. The Blackfoot language was the bond because everyone spoke only the language. Elders today probably faced and experienced the most change of any generation of people. The fast pace of living has caught up to the Blackfeet as a group of people in areas where language loss is very evident. The elders are worried about it. The spirituality in the families used to be strong. To be able to reflect back in time provides comfort to many elders because they have carried forward their knowledge and want the next generations to take over. Storytelling among the people was a favorite form of visiting with each other.

The elders valued the extended family concept of living. Their discussions reflect that the relatives took care of them as children. Constant praying for the well being of family members was done daily. Again, the Blackfoot language was held in high regard by the elders. They were proud of the family members that know and speak the Blackfoot language.

Blackfeet names given to family members were carefully chosen. These names had significant meaning and power to an individual throughout his lifetime. Many of the elders shared how their names were obtained. Their families have also all been named. People's names guide them through their journey in life. It is very important that every individual have in their possession a Blackfeet name.

The elders hold knowledge sacred. This knowledge can only be obtained through the Blackfoot language. Ceremonial rites and rituals have been handed down by Creator Sun since the beginning of time and must continue to remain so. The elders only shared what they felt was appropriate and stressed the writing of information is not considered revealing of or disturbing to the sacredness. The time is coming when many ceremonial rites need to be transferred to new and younger people. Therefore, the urgency for reviving the teachings through the Blackfoot language is of utmost concern. Ceremonies must continue on to provide protection to the people.

The elders have high regards for the Blackfoot language. The elders feel the language must be taught to the children. The children are going to bring back what was lost in language retention. Even though punishment was used to get rid of the language in the elders and generations before them, it made everyone place a higher value on the language. The elders are willing and anxious to take on apprentices of the language. Failure to retain the language has weakened and is threatening the Blackfeet knowledge base.

The elders reflected on their educational experience in the formal school setting. Those times were not totally enjoyable for many of the elders while others knew that education was a means of survival. All formal education systems had one goal in mind when teaching Blackfeet children; that goal was to produce English speakers at any expense. The devaluing of the Blackfeet way of life by education affected many generations of people. The educational systems also dismantled the strong family structures of the Blackfeet people. The elders feel the people must have their ceremonies to provide support, their language to transmit culture, and the singing and dancing to promote to restore the Blackfeet lifestyles.

The relationship between children and families is very strong. The elders have come to a realization that the language needs to be restored again. It is through the children where hope lies. Some elders have advocated teaching children at infancy levels and breast feeding will provide the nurturing and support all children need. The path must be paved for transferring tribal knowledge, which means more language speakers are needed. One elder advocated for a reflection and action process of seeking tribal knowledge by using tribal people to conduct field-base research.

Conclusions

Formal education has failed to include Blackfeet learning and teachings in its methodology. The elders talked about their concerns on education and their experiences when they attended school. The formal education provided hardships on children to learn. Their Blackfoot language was never accepted within the walls of the school and was not accepted on the premises or grounds. Nevertheless, the elders still tried hard in school to complete each year in good standing. If the Blackfoot language was spoken, harsh punishment was imposed on the children. The mental connection of speaking the language and punishment was soon realized.

The formal education process to which all Indian children and parents were subjected became a major influence on the lives of Blackfeet families. There was no way around it. This move toward formal schooling was a completely new and different approach to learning than how Blackfeet children were used to being taught at home.

Historically, the federal government has had a major influence on the Blackfeet people. Directly, this was by policies implemented. Indirectly, it was by vesting the same power to entities such as the churches and schools to carry out federal policies. Again, the two major goals of this policy were "educating" and "Christianizing." The Blackfeet people's historical experience has been the same as many other tribes in relation to education. The term generally accepted for this is "assimilation."

Support for the inclusion of Blackfeet knowledge in formal education is found in the works of Paulo Freire (1970) who says that learning should lead to "being able to name the world" around us. There are many factors that effect how one learns. These factors are influenced by the family, surroundings, and environment (world view). The Blackfeet had an extensive worldview starting with the creation of the world. Along with all the traditions, rituals, and ceremonies the native language was brought forth as the medium for which everything was transmitted. It is through the language of the Blackfeet that true realities are present. When people become disenfranchised, they lose the right to define their world. When having to use another set of definitions that are not their own, they are unable to articulate their truths about themselves. If definition of self comes from the outside one's culture, a true identity coming from the culture is lost. This is the key if the Blackfeet people want to utilize formal and informal learning methods.

Indian education has not served as a tool for restoring Blackfeet Knowledge. Many of the elders experienced most of the major federal policies affecting Indian people. Consequently, the elders are currently worried that many of these federal policies and especially those affecting education do not support the tribes in their efforts to restore tribal knowledge, transfer tribal knowledge to younger generations, or learn tribal knowledge by teaching the language in school settings. Their faith in the formal school setup is diminishing, and many of the elders are recommending community-based programs to teach Blackfeet knowledge. Some elders advocated for Blackfeet members to begin writing books on Blackfeet people so that these could be used in the schools. There are no books, curriculums, or resources directly related to the Blackfeet in the schools currently available.

Blackfeet knowledge must come from and through the language as an accepted methodology. The elders clearly stated that language is the vehicle for transmitting the culture. As the elders reflect back in time, they are regretful that their parents did not see to it that the language was taught in all the grades of school. Many of the elders admit that not all their children were taught the language at home. This dilemma has caused a major concern as to who is going to teach the language.

The health of the language has to do with the number of speakers in a concentrated population and, most importantly, with how many children speakers there are. This is the most important indicator in assessing the future of a language. Then the question arises concerning if the language will survive and what kind of shape it is in because steps may need to be taken to assure its survival. Healthy languages are not only used by a majority of the population but are used for most or all situations requiring communication. Therefore, languages must be self-sufficient or capable of expressing anything that the people want to communicate.

Education can transmit Blackfeet knowledge only if the language is valued and respected. The elders certainly stressed the urgency for the language to be used more often. The elders who already value the language, want others to do the same. The elders have faced and dealt with many of the federal policies that have had a major impact on Indian people's lives. Therefore, they are aware of the tools and policies that can assist in transmitting knowledge. Elders feel educators can do almost anything. They expressed the need for books, curriculum, and language texts to be written by Blackfeet people and used by Blackfeet people. If any money is gained from this, it would benefit a Blackfeet person or author.

American Indian languages are remarkably well attuned to Indian ways of life and Indian value systems. English cannot be used to describe these concepts and thoughts. English is incapable of expressing these values because the connotations would not be the same. Indian languages handle descriptions and concepts easily, cleanly, and efficiently.

The family role of transmitting tribal knowledge has been severely weakened. The elders reflected on the damaging effect of education on the Blackfeet language. Harsh punishment was carried out when children in the schools spoke the language. The children came home from attending school speaking only English. English also became the children's primary language in the home as well. Many elders said that they taught some of their children the language but not all of them. Some of their children can only understand the language. Elders also realized as much as they spoke the language in the home, the family ties have already weakened where the language was not valued or important any more.

As parents, some elders also questioned what use the language would be to their educated children. However, in the next breath, they stated how important it is for the children to learn the language, especially the grandchildren of these elders. Many elders spoke only to their spouse in the language and spoke English to their children. The switching into English has weakened the family role in transmitting knowledge.

The most important area of the language is the kinship. Families spoke the language for many generations. Loved ones spoke to children in the language and taught them the language. As they learned the language, they learned all the morals and teachings that go with it. Family groups and the community all spoke the language; therefore, it had high value and status. "All the endearments, all the nurturing, that is kinship is tied into a living organism of a community by people who know each other, and they know they belong together" (Fishman, 1996, p. 83).

The immersion school concept is an excellent approach for learning a language. The elders highly supported the immersion method of teaching the Blackfoot language which is being implemented on the Blackfeet Reservation. The elders have witnessed the capabilities of the children in mastering the language. Several of the children attending the immersion school are grandchildren of the elders. At least four of the elders reflected on their ability to communicate with these grandchildren in the Blackfoot language. A sense of pride and hope gleamed from the elders who shared this experience.

The immersion school concept of teaching Blackfeet language to preschool age children is highly acceptable to parents and elders in the community. This concept has been successfully used by many indigenous groups such as the native Hawaiians. On the Blackfeet Reservation, one school, Moccasin Flat Immersion School, has been in operation for four years. A second school, Cuts Wood Immersion School, opened in 1997. The schools operate under the auspices of Piegan Institute, a non-profit Indian-owned organization. The goal of the immersion schools is to produce 1,000 children speakers in the next 10 years. New state-of-the-art school buildings are built to serve as a model for other tribes to do the same. New comfortable buildings are conducive to positive learning. The one-room rural schools in the 1930's provided the most positive experience for the Blackfeet children. This concept was re-introduced in the immersion schools. However, this time the Blackfeet language was the medium for instruction rather than English.

While the role of the elder in relationship to Blackfeet knowledge has been embraced by community-based agencies, it has not been accepted or adequately utilized by formal educational institutions. The findings of the study reflect elder involvement and participation in the educational process has virtually been non-existent. The elders identified other elders who acquired knowledge in the Blackfeet Knowing. There was a strong sense of the elders wanting to be called upon by the people because of the urgency of time. It is time for key people on each reservation such as the elders to be looked upon as a means to begin a process of reviving tribal knowledge.

All the elders want their children to become educated and recognize that education is a crucial part of our lives today. At times education was compared to survival by the elders. Education entails being able to speak the language. The true knowledge of the Blackfeet people rests in the language. Elders want their children to speak the language.

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Parents as people. Problematising parental involvement programmes.

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Abstract: This paper describes four case studies of parental involvement programmes and examines: the factors that enable partners to collaborate effectively; how the role of 'parent' is constructed; the contribution that education can make to combating social exclusion.

Introduction

This study investigates collaboration between schools and adult education providers in relation to some case-study examples of 'parent education' and 'family literacy' programmes. It examines how these organisations' different conceptions of their purposes and their under-pinning values can lead to different outcomes particularly in relation to their conceptualisation of the role of the 'parent'. It is also concerned to assess how far such education might contribute to the tackling of 'social exclusion' which is defined as 'the multiple and changing factors which result in people being excluded from the normal exchanges, practices and rights of modern society' (Commision of European Communities, 1993). Whilst poverty is clearly an important factor in social exclusion the paper also focuses on the ways in which learning and education can contribute to inclusion.

Methodology

This paper draws on data from a larger study that surveyed, in 1997, all the state funded Primary Schools (for children aged 5-12) and Secondary Schools (for 12-18 year olds) in Scotland in terms of programmes that were conducted jointly with community - based organisations. From this survey ten case study schools were selected for in-depth study representing a range of geographical situations, policy contexts, sizes of schools and age range of students (see Tett et al, 1998). This paper concentrates on four of these case study schools which had established collaborative projects with adult educators in order to provide programmes of 'parent education' or 'family literacy' which operated in a range of policy and geographical contexts. Semi-structured interviews were undertaken, in 1998, with parents, teachers, head teachers, and adult education staff, in order to examine their differing perspectives on these programmes. These interviews were then transcribed and the paper is based on an analysis of these data. The paper concentrates on the differing conceptions that the interviewees had of the purposes of the programme and the values that underpinned it. First, then, a brief description of the case study projects.

The case studies

All four case studies involved collaboration, at least between the school and adult educators and in some cases other agencies as well, in programmes for involving parents in the life of their local school.

The aim of case study 1, which is based in an area of multiple socio-economic disadvantage, was to 'encourage parental involvement in their children's education and to foster partnership between home, school and community by increasing social interaction and self confidence and improving access to jobs'. This project focuses on the 'whole parent' where a variety of courses are run in response to local need. In addition several groups have been developed by the women participants themselves. This self-help approach is encouraged by the project manager who sees her role as a facilitator. The project uses a very wide local network of organisations to deliver the courses. Much of the work of the full time adult education worker is focused on establishing and maintaining good working relationships with parents, teaching staff and the network of outside agencies.

Case study 2 is based in a similar socio-economic area and comprises several linked projects two of which, the 'shared reading scheme' and the toy library, are designed to promote parent and child interaction in order to improve the educational attainment of the children in the primary school. The other project 'the before and after school club' is run by a committee of lone parents who employ a number of part-time staff. Although the staff will assist children with their homework this is not a high priority. The aim of the club is to provide childcare to enable parents to take up educational opportunities or full-time employment. This particular project, then, has been developed in response to the needs expressed by the parents for cheap, good quality, child-care rather than educational activities.

Case study 3 is a small rural school which is developing a 'Learning Out of School Project' with three aims: to strengthen home/school links; raise awareness of what children are being taught; develop the shared experience of learning between the parent and child. Although the project aimed to be a collaborative effort involving the community, the headteacher and parents in both the development and planning, neither parents not the community have been willing to be involved in this way. So, despite what the head-teacher describes as 'an open door policy', the involvement of parents and other members of the community in the managment of the project is very limited. An important contributary factor to this is that there are no additional resources available to the school of adult education staff, time, or materials.

Case study 4 is a family literacy project based in a outer-city housing estate in a poor working class area which is a collaboration between adult education and the two local Primary School. It employs a full time adult education worker and a number of 'teaching assistants' who act as a link between parents and the schools. It seeks to include the literacy practices of everyday life in the curriculum through, for example, parent-led investigations, focused on identifying literacy practices in the home and community. This approach is coupled with an attempt to enable participants to express their own concerns and aspirations and to encourage then to think critically about their school experiences. Adults are encouraged to identify and value their own educative role with the emphasis being on the positive ways in which they already successfully educate their children so that the work with the school in relation to their children's learning becomes more of a partnership.

Comparison of the four case studies

All four case study schools are focusing on involving parents, almost exclusively mothers, in the school as a means of increasing the educational attainment of their children. However, the case studies are underpinned by different values and purposes in relation to the way parents are viewed. For example, activities in cases 1 and 4 included provision for parents to develop their own education as well at that of their children. In these cases there is an emphasis on meeting the needs of parents and encouraging them to develop an awareness of their own requirements. This approach has been led by adult educators who have taken time to discuss with parents what provision they would wish to see and provided support to them in achieving their objectives. This has resulted in one project in case study 2, the 'Before and After School Club'(BASC), being led, managed and staffed by local women.

All the projects expected the parents to support the work of the school but differed in the type of involvement they encouraged. In case 3 parents were seen by the headteacher, and saw themselves, as 'helpers' who felt that they had no knowledge of their own to offer the school. As one parent put it 'the teachers know what to do about education and I would rather bake cakes for fundraising for the school because I can do that well'. On the other hand case 4 encouraged parents to see themselves as educators who had their own valuable knowledge to contribute to their children's education which might be different from that seen as important by the school. There is evidence that this was resulting in conflict between the adult education worker and the headteacher because of their differing purposes. The head-teacher wished to see more emphasis in the programme being placed on the educational development of children even when this meant paying less attention to the needs of the adults.

There were also different approaches to the management of the projects though, on the whole with the exception of BASC, responsibility for decision making was mainly confined to professionals with some consultation with parents even in those projects led by adult education staff. There was little evidence of genuine participation in decision making being shared by participants in the programmes although case studies 1, 2 and 4 all involved negotiation over the curriculum.

The cases all have different approaches to collaboration and differing levels of resources available to help them achieve this. Case study 3 would see their main task as provision of parent education and they do not collaborate to achieve this mainly because the head-teacher does not have the necessary resources of time herself nor funding to employ someone else to do so. Case studies 1 and 4 are much more focused on encouraging participation in decision making and in collaborating with parents and other groups to achieve this. The two types of projects in case study 2 have different approaches with BASC emphasising participation by the parents in the running of the project where the other projects see their main task as providing facilities and courses as a collaboration between local parents and the school staff.

The key differences in the case studies can be summarised then as, on the one hand, meeting the needs of parents as well as children by promoting parents' own education and involvement in the school on their terms, and, on the other, seeing the parents' only role as being involved in the education of their children on the school's terms.

Collaboration

All four case studies offer examples of joint provision between schools and adult educators. Learning needs in the community are many sided and meeting them partly depends on professionals with different skills working together but there are barriers relating to professional boundaries and pedagogic approach that make true collaboration difficult to achieve.

The essential tasks of collaboration involve decisions about which organisations to work with; over what activities; and on what issues. In general there are three principal factors that contribute to effective collaboration (see Huxam, 1996). One factor is the adding of value so that all partners are able to achieve 'more' with 'less' and this can be exemplified through the case study 1 activities where resources of space, facilities and staff expertise have been used to provide opportunities for both adults and pupils. Another factor is the broadening of the scale and scope of interventions that are possible and this can be exemplified through all four case studies. The most demanding form of collaboration is where there are complex social issues such as the multitude of factors that lead to social exclusion which have ramifications for so many sections of society that their alleviation must be multi-organisational. To some extent the work in case studies 2 and 4 are examples of this kind of action where the educational needs of both parents and children have been addressed. Overall the data show that for collaboration to be effective the organisations need to share, or have complementary, values and purposes if a satisfactory partnership is to be developed.

A major constraint to effective collaboration is limited access to resources, of both time and money since the development of partnerships requires much effort. Partners working together may have conflicting purposes and I have highlighted the tension between the conflicting views of parents as simply being classroom helpers on the one hand or alternatively as having their own educational needs. A final constraint relates to competing traditions between professionals that limit the type of collaboration that is considered feasible and this was highlighted in case study 4.

Parents as people

Parent education and family literacy programmes are always aimed at poor and working class mothers as a kind of prophylactic against the potential failure of schools. They draw on what Luttrell(1997: 115) has described as *'the gendered organisation of school with its structural, but hidden reliance on ideal , not real, women. This gendered arrangement directs people's attention towards the qualities of the caretakers and away form the conditions under which children are (and are not) cared for and educated'.* The assumption that pervades many parent education programmes is that mothers are blamed, and they in turn blame themselves, for the institutional failure of schools to educate disadvantaged children.

The dynamics of these assumptions are insiduous in two ways. First, a child's successful schooling should depend upon a great deal more than the efficacy of any individual parent. That is the promise of public education. People are quick to recognise that schools, by themselves, cannot be expected to meet the intellectual, social and emotional needs of all children, especially those who are poor. But neither can individual parents meet all these needs. As long as the responsibility for monitoring children's schooling rests on individual parents and is not shared with school officials, and teachers, as well as social services of all sorts, then working class and poor children's school success will be compromised. Second this focus on each individual mother's responsibilities for her children's education encourages women to view their own educational goals as 'selfish'. This is where the case studies that involve working equally with parents on their own educational goals are able to challenge these negative self conceptions.

Many studies in the UK, Australia and the USA have shown that positive parental involvement with schools is one of the prerequisites of effective schooling, and that cooperation between school and home can raise educational achievement (see eg. Brighouse and Tomlinson 1991). However, Cuckle (1996:27) has suggested that parents who lack confidence in their own abilities are unwilling to help their children with school work and require considerable guidance if they are to do so. Moreover, Tizard et al (1988) showed fitting in help with reading into busy and disrupted lives was a burden that many families found difficult to sustain especially when they felt that they did not have the competence to carry out this task effectively. Cuckle (op cit) has also suggested that a crucial element in the effective helping of children by their parents and carers is good communication between home and school. However, if parents are to be genuine partners in their childrens'education then they must be able to share power, responsibility and ownership in ways which show a high degree of mutuality (see Bastiani 1993). This becomes problematic if parental knowledge about schools and schools=92 knowledge about parents are characterised by a lack of understanding. For example, Tomlinson (1993:144) has argued that *'there is evidence that teachers are still not well-informed about the lives, backgrounds, expectations and desires of ethnic minority parents and are still willing to stereotype such families as "problems'".* There is also evidence that schools have not substantively changed their way of doing things as a result of parental involvement (see eg. Adler et al 1989). It appears that parents'ability to influence school practices is not high and those who do not share the prevailing culture of the school, such as ethnic minorities, the working classes, people living in poverty, are likely to be excluded from having any 'voice'.

Crozier(1998: 132) confirms this lack of partnership between schools and parents in her study. She found that *'although teachers talked about partnership as working together with parents, it was in fact based on the teachers' concerns and definition of the situation, a commitment to bringing about parents' agreement with their view or indeed ensuring consonance. Frequently, teachers spoke of the fact that where parents were happy then they were no problem; parents were happy when their view matched that of the teachers. Where this was not the case criticisms of parents or indeed a deficit model of parents developed'.* This view of parents separates the problems presented by individuals from the social and political order which creates these problems in a way which individualises failure, and supports an approach based on the notion of social pathology. From this point of view, such parents are not seen as able to make a positive contribution to the school and there is therefore no possibility of them being seen as genuine partners in their childrens' schooling. This is where the intervention of adult educators can be crucially important in redressing the balance towards the voicing of parents' views.

Most parent education and family literacy programmes assume that the schools perspective is 'correct' and need only be supported by parents to be successful and so they have little impact on school-community connections. Where there is a true partnership model with joint decision making between parents, adult educators, and schools and the assumption is that the schools programme is open to negotiation there is likely to be more opportunity to involve community members. This then opens up the possibility of re-creating the school's programme and mission, in challenging the school's hierarchal structure, and in developing authentic connections between schools and their communities.

Conclusion

The personal and social damage inflicted by inequality, social exclusion and restricted opportunity is now widely recognised. Learning should represent a resource for people, and whole societies, to help them identify such inequalities, probe their origins and begin to challenge them, using skills, information and knowlege to achieve change. Through learning, competing values can be reviewed, their relevance for society today and tomorrow can be assessed, and newly emerging values can be transmitted.

School teachers and adult education staff come from different cultures and have different conceptions of education and learning. They have, however, distinctive and complementary roles to play in promoting learning and education and creating a better social order through a parent centred, dialogic approach that positions parents as people with an important contribution to make to the life of the school and the community. The implications of this type of approach to 'parent education' and 'family literacy' programmes are far reaching and would require a considerably different emphasis from that which is currently common even in these case study examples. As Merz and Furman (1997: 66) point out, *'while purportedly aimed at direct collaboration between the school and the parents, many parental-involvement programs remain at a shallow level, and become a mechanism to get parent support for the school-determined program'.* Clearly, whilst learning alone cannot abolish inequality and social divisions it can make a real contribution to combating them, not least by tackling the ways in which social exclusion is reinforced through the very processes and outcomes of education and training. If parents can be helped to challenge deficit views of the culture of their homes and communities then a small step has been taken in enabling their voices to be heard in the learning of their children and in their own educational development. For this to happen, however, some of the control that professionals have imposed on schooling for so long will have to be released and they will have to learn to think of themselves instead as an 'agency of the citizenry'(Merz and Furman, 1997: 98).

Margaret Davies argued in 1913, *'Even a little knowledge is a dangerous thing. It causes a smouldering discontent which may flame into active rebellion against a low level of life, and produces a demand, however stammering, for more interests and chances. Where we see ferment, there has been some of the yeast of education'.* (Quoted in Scott, G. 1998:56). If teachers and adult educators wish to see changes in the relationship between schools and parents then 'the yeast of education' will need to be applied to parent education and family literacy programmes in ways that will develop parents living in poverty, and other community members, as active citizens making demands for change. Parents would then be regarded as people with important contributions to make as collaborating partners rather than 'teachers' helpers' or the people to be blamed for their children's 'failures'. Different ways of knowing and understanding the world then become valued rather than being dismissed as 'unofficial knowledge'.

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Development and Validation of an Instrument to Measure Critical Thinking in Respiratory Care

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Abstract: Purpose - to establish the reliability and validity of an instrument to measure critical thinking among respiratory therapists. Questions derived from Mishoe's (1995) study, expert therapists and the literature. Content validity established. Pilot instrument tested with reliability = 0.94 (Cronbach's alpha). Instrument can be used to measure critical thinking in respiratory care.

Introduction

Critical thinking helps us to decide what really matters, what is important and how to achieve our goals and aspirations. The ability to think has always been important and critical thinking is required for all professionals, most certainly so in the health care professions. Basic technical skills may no longer be enough to process and use information. Not only is a well grounded knowledge base necessary, but practitioners must possess critical thinking abilities that incorporate logical reasoning skills, problem solving, reflection, decision making, and lifelong learning (Mishoe, 1995). Health care practitioners must become thinkers who know a great deal and who can continually adapt, refine, and use their knowledge. The ability to think critically is the main proficiency necessary that will enable not only health care practitioners, but all professionals to meet the demands of a rapidly changing environment.

There is a need to investigate critical thinking in professional practice and to be able to make summarizations about the nature of critical thinking which can be tested in further research. The majority of the literature in adult education on critical thinking focuses on the development of critical thinking and related issues regarding theory, learning, teaching, ethical considerations and sociopolitical concerns (Mishoe, 1995). Mishoe (1995) identified the critical thinking skills and traits of respiratory therapists in acute care settings. Respiratory therapists provide treatment and diagnostic care to patients with respiratory difficulties. They provide this care under the direction of a physician in either hospital, physician office, extended care, or home care settings. But, how one specifically measures critical thinking behaviors in clinical practice is not well understood. The purpose of this study was to develop a reliable and valid instrument that will measure critical thinking in respiratory care practice.

Theoretical Framework

Mishoe's (1995) study focused on the expert practice of 18 respiratory therapists employed in acute care hospitals settings. She determined that critical thinking in respiratory practice involves the abilities to prioritize, anticipate, troubleshoot, communicate, negotiate, reflect, and make decisions. The traits that affect critical thinking in practice include willingness to reconsider and challenge others, appreciation of multiple perspectives and continued learning, understanding of departmental and professional perspectives that impact the profession, and openness to continuing change in their personal and professional lives (Mishoe, 1995). The when, how, and why respiratory therapists are able to use these critical thinking skills is influenced by dispositional traits and organizational factors. Mishoe (1996) further reports that the work context and the role of the organization, including managers, must be addressed when attempting to explain or facilitate critical thinking in respiratory care practice.

Critical thinking in the practice of respiratory therapy is the cognitive process described by logical reasoning, problem-solving, and reflection (Mishoe 1995). This working definition incorporates the reflective, communicative, practical, and experiential aspects of critical thinking in respiratory care practice. To advance research and transfer these qualitative concepts into a quantitative empirical process, critical thinking is further defined as observable, measurable behaviors from situations and circumstances that occur within the context of professional clinical respiratory care practice which require logical reasoning, problem-solving and reflection. Mishoe's study (1995) can be shown to overlap the ways of knowing described in the expert practice of nurses (Benner, 1984) and to the professional performance goals of physicians (Miller, 1980). Given these works, the antecedent relationship of critical thinking and critical thinking skills to expert practice was suggested.

Instrument Development Process

The purpose of this research was to develop a valid instrument to measure critical thinking in respiratory care practice. Since an appropriate instrument that would gather desired data could not be found, a survey questionnaire was developed (Table 1). Survey research is considered to be a branch of social scientific research and is used to accurately assess the characteristics of whole populations of people (Kerlinger, 1986). This is the intent when using a survey instrument to measure the critical thinking skills of respiratory therapists.

Several sources were used in generation of the item pool. An in depth interview with Mishoe and review of her work (1995) generated several items. From the literature, Benner's (1984) study on the novice to expert practice among nurses and Brookfield's (1987) four stages of the critical thinking process were helpful. Other sources used for item generation and for content validity came from an expert panel of six respiratory therapists who currently work in various specialized areas of respiratory care. These experts were chosen based on recommendations by Nunnally & Bernstein (1994) that participants in content validation efforts should be as representative as possible of the types of individuals who will eventually be studied with the instrument. The expert panel consisted of a technical director of a large urban research-based hospital from a metropolitan area, two respiratory care educators from a baccalaureate respiratory therapy school housed in a state university, a neonatal/perinatal specialist, a pulmonary function laboratory supervisor and a clinical coordinator for a respiratory home health company which covers a third of the state. These particular individuals were chosen because they understand the practice of respiratory care and represent as close as possible the population that will be studied. The panel was provided with definitions of the critical thinking skills and trigger examples of how critical thinking could be operationalized into possible questions. They were then asked to give an example from their clinical experience, a situation that would illustrate the logic of the critical thinking skill described by Mishoe (1995).

A total of 215 raw items for possible inclusion in a survey instrument were generated from these four sources. This process intended to find saturation among the items gathered concerning critical thinking behaviors. Refinement of the item pool began by deleting redundancies which decreased the item pool to 167 questions. Content validity was assessed by placing the remaining 167 questions randomly on a survey instrument and was mailing it to the expert panel for their input and rating of each item in terms of importance. This expert panel survey was necessary to decrease the number of items for possible inclusion without infusion the researcher's own subjectivity. Results were analyzed for means and rank of each item.

Two factors were necessary for an item to remain in the pool: a) an item must receive a score of "4" or above from a possible scale of 1 to 6 from all experts and b) the mean of all scores must be equal to or greater than "5". By process of elimination, the item pool was further decreased to 90 items. The ideal survey measurement instrument requires sufficient but not excessive indicators, because too many indicators is a wasteful measurement of the construct. Ninety total items proved to provide too many questions in some constructs while other constructs did not have enough. Therefore, criteria for item inclusion was further refined to: no construct will have less than 8 items and no construct will have more than 12 items. This ranking method resulted in some ranks having more questions needed from that particular set. When these "ties" occurred, the best items from that particular rank were chosen. This resulted in a further reduction of items from 90 to 70. It was felt that the questions remaining indicated saturation of content areas for the construct.

Determination of Construct Validity

The term *construct* is used in psychology to refer to something that is not observable but is literally constructed by the investigator to summarize or account for regularities or relationships in observed behavior (Thorndike, 1997). For instance, we speak of a therapist's ability to prioritize as a way of summarizing observed consistency in past behavior in relation to patient care. This construct (prioritizing) then can be used to predict how individuals will act on future occasions. Items for inclusion on this instrument were derived from Mishoe's (1995) study and these skills provided the constructs needed in order to operationalize critical thinking into measurable behaviors. These skills (constructs) are prioritizing, anticipating, troubleshooting, communicating, negotiating, decision making, and reflecting.

Several methods for construct validity are described in the measurement and evaluation literature (Kerlinger, 1996; & Thorndike, 1997). Construct validity for this survey instrument was assessed by a modified Q sort. The remaining 70 items were randomized, numbered from 1-70 for tracking, and cut into small pieces of paper. Seven envelopes with a conceptual definition of each construct on separate envelopes was provided to six faculty members of a baccalaureate respiratory therapy school. They were asked to sort the random questions into a construct or critical thinking dimension that best identified which construct the item belonged. This type of sorting procedure was different from traditional Q sorts in that this was not a forced distribution of the items into an equal number per construct, but the items could be sorted into a construct with no limitations on the number per construct. Five of the six Q sort packets were completed. This further reduced the pool to 48 items because in order for an item to be accepted for construct validity, at least 80% of the responses had to be sorted into a particular construct. However, two of the seven constructs were left with too few questions. The researchers went back to the original expert panel item pool to see if there were any items that should possibly be put back into the pool. Twenty three items were retrieved and rewritten, then re-sorted by the same faculty to ensure construct validity. All remaining items were carefully scrutinized for clarity and some questions rewritten. This resulted in enough items per construct and the final item pool was further decreased to 44 questions.

Reliability and Validity of the Instrument

The research sample for this study consisted of registered respiratory therapists working in various clinical settings throughout the United States. These particular practitioners are well suited for this study because of their experience in respiratory care practice. This includes respiratory care in the non-ICU areas, in the ICU, in ambulatory care, in extended care facilities, for the homebound patient, in the emergency room, in the diagnosis of cardiopulmonary disease, and in disease management. A random sample of 100 registered or registry eligible respiratory therapists were drawn from a membership list obtained from the American Association for Respiratory Care.

A total of 100 surveys were mailed with two follow-up mailings for non-respondents. A cover letter describing the research and a self-addressed, stamped envelope was included with each survey. Sixty surveys were returned for a 60% response rate. Each question was scored from a Likert six point scale corresponding to how well the respondent did each of the tasks in their clinical practice.

Several computations were reviewed for validation of the instrument. If an item revealed that more than 80% of the responses were clustered around one or two points on the Likert scale, then insufficient variance was indicated. Enough variance was found for all items using this criteria. Possible redundant questions were noted by intercorrelations. Five sets of questions were reviewed and two were re-worded to eliminate any potential duplication. The determination of the reliability of the survey instrument was performed using Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency of an item to determine the extent to which items categorized within a particular critical thinking behavior measure that construct. Table 2 includes a summary of the means, standard deviations and coefficient alpha results for the total instrument as well as for each construct.

Discussion

This process demonstrates that critical thinking behaviors are measurable and accountable by the framework described by Mishoe (1995). The results showed encouraging evidence of reliability and validity for the total instrument and the results further indicate that each construct measures what it theoretically is supposed to measure. The reliability computations indicate that there is internal consistency to the instrument and that the items are homogenous. The instrument at 0.94 proves to rate high in all reliable assessments which is important in determining the accuracy of an instrument. This is the first attempt to develop a mechanism for assessing the critical thinking behaviors of respiratory therapists. With minor revisions, this instrument can provide a useful tool for future research in assessing the critical thinking behaviors of respiratory therapists.

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TABLE 1

Overview of Instrument Development and Validation Process

Step	Methods	Results/Changes
1. Item Pool Development	a. Literature review	27 items
	b. In-depth interview and review of Mishoe's (1995) dissertation	70 items
	c. Expert panel	118 items Total 215 items
2. Item Pool Refinement	Review for redundancies	50 items eliminated Total 165 items
3. Content Validity	Expert survey	95 items eliminated Total 70 items
4. Construct Validity	Modified Q sort	22 items eliminated Total 48 items
5. Item Pool Refinement	Re-sort	4 items eliminated Total 44 items
6. Instrument Validation	100 mailed surveys	Coefficient Alpha = .9442

TABLE 2

Instrument Validation Results: Means, SD, and Reliability Estimates

Construct	# Items	Means	SD	Coefficient Alpha
Total	44	4.62	.4494	.9442
Prioritizing	7	4.96	.2526	.8360
Anticipating	5	4.44	.3279	.6634
Troubleshooting	6	4.10	.9002	.7260
Communicating	6	4.86	.1921	.8590
Negotiating	8	4.53	.2613	.8675
Decision making	6	4.64	.4084	.8094
Reflecting	6	4.61	.2017	.8500

Women Teaching for Social Change in Adult Education: The Spiritual and Cultural Dimensions of "Teaching Across Borders"

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Abstract: *This study is an exploratory look at understanding how spirituality is renegotiated and informs the emancipatory work of a purposeful sample of women activist adult educators.*

The role of adult education in responding to the educational needs of a multicultural society is being discussed in many adult education circles. These discussions focus on how adult educators can challenge systems of power, privilege, oppression, and colonization, and "cross borders" of race, gender, class, national origin to work for social change. Informed by critical, feminist, and Africentric theoretical frameworks on adult education, some focus on challenging structural power relations in adult higher education classrooms (Hayes & Colin, 1994; Johnson-Bailey & Cervero, 1997; Tisdell, 1998), while others on dealing with these issues in popular education settings (Walters & Manicom, 1996). There is acknowledgment that teaching across these borders for social change is difficult, requiring a willingness to deal with conflict, resistance, strong emotions, as groups engage in critical dialogue and hopefully move to social action. What is missing from the literature is attention to how underlying spiritual commitments influence the motivations or practices of these adult educators doing this border-crossing work, or how spirituality can influence dealing with these issues in positive ways. Clearly there are both male and female adult educators who are attempting to challenge power relations based on gender, race, class, and culture. But the vast majority are women guided by feminist and antiracist educational perspectives, many of whom do have underlying spiritual commitments that influence their work. Many of these women grew up and were socialized into a particular religious tradition, but have also had to re-negotiate their adult spirituality in light of having been raised in patriarchal religious traditions. In light of the lack of adult education literature that deals with women, spirituality and social justice, *the purpose of this study is to examine how spirituality influences the motivations and practices of a multicultural group of women adult educators who are teaching across borders of race, gender, class, sexual orientation, and/or are activists for social change, who grew up in a particular religious tradition, and have renegotiated a more relevant adult spirituality.*

The literature within the field of adult education examining the underlying spiritual commitments of adult educators and activists for social change is extremely limited. On one level this is surprising, since almost all who write about education for social change cite the important influence of educator and activist Paulo Freire, who was a deeply spiritual man. Freire only occasionally referred to his own spirituality in his writing but the liberation theology movement of Latin America deeply influenced his work as an educator (Freire, 1997). On another level, it is not surprising that adult educators would be relatively silent about their spiritual commitments. Indeed, there have been many injustices done in the name of "religious righteousness" — indigenous populations have been decimated and colonized by those who think they have a market on Truth; women have been relegated to second-class citizenship in the name of many patriarchal religions. In spite of these horrors and the dangers of imposing a religious agenda, many women have renegotiated a meaningful spirituality that does inform their work for social change (Ruether, 1996). Many social activists and educators such as Martin Luther King, Gandhi, Dorothy Day, and several participants in the recent study on community and commitment by Daloz et al. (1996), have initiated social change movements fueled partly by their underlying spiritual commitments. Black feminist educator, bell hooks (1994) discusses the importance of spirituality in guiding her own educational practice for social change. O'Grady (1994) discusses how spirituality can be used to diffuse conflict in doing cross-border work in multicultural education, and Hart and Holton (1993) note that it offers hope to emancipatory adult education ventures. Thus, there seems to be a place for spirituality in doing the healing work of social transformation. This study is an exploratory look and attempt at understanding how spirituality has been renegotiated and how it informs the emancipatory work of a purposeful sample of women adult educators.

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Methodology

This ongoing qualitative research study was informed by a poststructural feminist research theoretical framework, which suggests that that the positionality (race, gender, class, sexual orientation) of researchers, teachers, and students affects how one gathers and accesses data, how one constructs and views knowledge, as well as how one deals with "crossing borders" in research and teaching. Further, all feminist research perspectives (Merriam and Simpson, 1995) argue that research should benefit the participants in some way. While as a feminist poststructural interviewer, I hope that the research is of benefit to the participants, I did nothing in the interviews to overtly effect change accept to share some of my own background relative to the subject, as a white woman who grew up Catholic, and who teaches diversity and equity classes. Thus, this phase of the research project is largely interpretive; several of these participants may participate in a more in-depth participatory second phase of the study. This research is ongoing, and thus far, there have been 9 women participants (2 African American, 2 Chicana, 3 European American, 1 Native American, 1 Asian American). Criteria for sample selection were that all participants: (1) be adult educators "teaching across borders" for social change in higher education or as community activists; (2) have grown up and educated in a specific religious tradition as a child; (3) note that their adult spirituality (either based on a re-appropriation of the religious tradition of their childhood, or a different spirituality) strongly motivated them to do their social justice work. All participants participated in a 2-hour taped (and transcribed) interview which focused on (1) describing their spiritual journey; (2) how their spirituality motivates and informs their adult education practice; (3) how their spirituality relates to their own cultural background in working for social justice. Many participants also provided written documents of their own writing that addressed some of their involvement in social action pursuits and/or issues directly related to their spirituality. Data were analyzed according to the constant comparative method (Merriam, 1998).

Findings: Profiles in Focus

While the data were analyzed according to the constant comparative method, because of the complex nature of the study, and because the particular life-context of the participants is central to having an understanding of the interplay between their spirituality and their activist work as adult educators, brief profiles of four of the participants (due to space limitations, and chosen because of their diverse ethnic, class, and cultural backgrounds) will be provided to try to give some context to these women. A brief discussion will follow.

Shirley: Shirley is an African American woman who just celebrated turning 50. She grew up in a racially segregated working class neighborhood in the Midwest. As she says, "my family was active in the struggle for the rights of workers and justice under the law for Black people," and had a long-standing relationship with the Black Baptist Church, and there were many ministers in her family. She describes that while her formal religious background is Baptist, her family did not embrace the "no card-playing" or "no dancing" rules in the tradition. She explains the focus was on "the main piece that there's God, and there's justice and mercy, and that your main responsibility in the world is to…share your blessings with others. And to stand up … and be brave in the face of injustice because you're backed up by a power that's stronger than government and armies, as long as you are doing the right thing." She notes that her grandmother "hoped to die what they used to call a 'race woman.'" (She explains that this is a woman who works constantly for justice, particularly on behalf of Black people in both local communities and in national contexts.) Thus, Shirley had a long legacy of activism, particularly around civil rights, and much of these activities were organized through the church.

Shirley went to college, began studying black history, and questioned her childhood Christian beliefs. "I became convinced Christianity was a trick – the oppressor to keep us humble and in bondage… Even the terminology 'Lord', 'Master' – I had serious issue with it, and stopped going to church. It was also part of the Black Power movement that was challenging the civil disobedience that required nonviolence and not physically fighting back." She notes that "there was no spirituality to speak of" in the Black Power movement, and she moved away from the organized church for a long time. Eventually, however, she notes "I was confronted with the notion that I really believed in a power – a positive power and a negative power, and I was calling it by different names, but in reality it was the same power that I had known about as a child." Over the years in addition to raising her two children and being married and divorced, Shirley was involved in many different activists activities, in both her paid and non-paid work. Virtually in all of these activities as an educator for organizations such as the Urban League, Black Women's Health Project, and with adult literacy programs, she was involved in cross cultural conflict mediation, and the development of more culturally relevant educational programs. She currently is a tenured faculty member at a community college teaching reading and writing and adult basic education where she directly teaches across borders of race, class, gender, sexual orientation as it arises in the everyday lives of herself and her students, and raising consciousness about these issues with co-workers on campus. She and a multicultural group of her women colleagues meet in each others' homes explicitly for these purposes where they share both their own vulnerability and knowledge about these issues. In addition, their work together has overflowed to the campus in the form of workshops and conversations about diversity. At times there are "spiritual moments" in these conversations, and she describes one experience at a campus diversity workshop, which "showed the power of being authentic and telling the truth outloud."

Shirley currently does not belong to a church per se. Her partner is a Christian, and she notes sometimes she goes with him, and she has connections to the Muslim community and sometimes goes there. She meditates daily, centering on the notion of "God is love." While she reports that she likes many of the prayers in organized religion, some of the word images (father/he) are barriers, and "some of the pictures and images can take me away from centering…I find that I'm able to be more connected in silence and solitude, but I do like the evoking of the spirit that happens through the music." In thinking about how spirituality informs her work she notes "The purpose of life is to restore and maintain the balance, which is … order, justice…and truth. My intention is to walk my convictions, and to be authentic, and to show love, to teach how to do that through my actions and evoking of spirit, of love, of courage, and justice. Especially in working with women's groups in telling the truth and being as real as I know how to be, and trying to bring forth the power of God in myself, I can touch that in other people." Her daily meditation centers on this. She notes "I am certainly a student of the teachings of Jesus. When people ask me, I say I'm Muslim because Muslim is one who submits to the will of God," but notes that membership in organized religion is not important for her. She seldom discusses her spirituality directly in classes with students, though people know she celebrates Ramadan, and Kwanza, and that she is largley a vegetarian partly for spiritual reasons. In her closing thoughts on spirituality and education for social justice, she notes "I just think it's absolutely connected…I've been going to church a lot more, because I like this church, but my spirituality is separate from that…Like I will keep going to work because this is the best place for me to be teaching, but I am teaching whether I'm at [the community college] or not." In reflecting on her own spirituality in relationship to being an African American woman and her involvement in social justice efforts, she notes: "I think my responsibility is great because I know what people went through so that I could have the freedom and the power to move forward in the world, so I must get up! And I must dig deep! And I must do good! And to not do that would be an affront to my ancestors who stayed alive, and stayed strong, and stayed spiritually connected through centuries of brutality and everything, beyond slavery. That's what it is for me."

Harriet. Harriet is a 44 year-old white woman who grew up in a working class family in the rural South in a particular branch of the Pentecostal church where she went to church four times per week. She describes that in the rural Deep South that "it has to be understood in the context of being your culture. It's not your religion or spirituality, because it's everything you are and what you do and how you live your life… It's your way of life." She also notes that while she didn't realize it at the time "Pentecostal folks are pretty poor people." She was heavily involved in her Church, singing in the choir, teaching Sunday school as a teenager, and says "I loved it; I was just into it." Harriet got pregnant when she was 16, married, finished high school. She had a second child while in nursing school and split with her husband, after he "screamed at me that I

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was 'queer'. I had no idea what he was talking about... He explained it to me, and I thought, Wow! He's right!" Harriet described a painful story of coming to terms with her lesbian identity in the Deep South, in light of her religious tradition. She talked to many ministers and church people, who alternately made her feel guilty and hopeful, and one finally suggested to "leave it up to God." Harriet described a pivotal experience that happened about a year later. "I got hurt playing softball and I tore my quadriceps so bad I passed out. I went to the best orthopedist in town, who put a splint on it which hurt really bad. I also believed in faith healing, and one night I went to the altar I felt this real coldness go into my leg, and then [it] got really hot, and I thought "wow" and the minister told me -- I took the splint off, and the big lump that was on my leg, it was gone!... Well that was a turning point for me, because I thought 'why would God heal me, if I was this person that was condemned to hell. God wouldn't do that for me, and I thought 'OK, this is my sign, that it's OK for me to be [gay]'." She eventually left her church, and she had many painful experiences, including losing her children (and eventually getting them back) because of being an out lesbian. "I was taught as a kid to be honest above everything else. Be, Be *honest*!" So in spite of her painful experiences, she never lied about her sexual orientation.

In the years that immediately followed, she occasionally went to church because she missed the music. She had been involved in many activist activities, including as a counselor at a battered women's shelter. She met her life partner at an abortion rights rally, and began a formerly battered women's support group at the local college She worked for years as a nurse. A turning point in her spiritual development was when she attended a women's music festival. It was in this context that she met many women who were both like her in terms of sexual orientation, but very different in terms of cultural background and religion. She also met women who were involved in various versions of "feminist women's spirituality," including the goddess traditions, which she found extremely affirming. Because of her own journey as an out lesbian and her commitments to rights for women and all oppressed people, she and her partner began an adult education center based on feminist principles and honoring of "women's spirit " and the principles of adult popular education. While there has been much attempted violence and assaults on them and their property, they have forged ahead trying to meet the needs of some of the local poor and oppressed people, dealing directly with the transformation of homophobia and other systems of oppression, such as race and class. She notes with irony "it was prophesied in my church that I would preach when I was 14 years old!" and explains that people say to her "you got your calling all right! You're just in a different place!" In asking her if she still defines herself as Christian, she pauses "I think your core beliefs, where do they come from? Mine came out of the Judeo – Christian church. I don't know if people can change what is in the core... First of all I believe in honesty. I believe in fairness,... in justice...." She reports the woman attorney who worked with them in the defense of the violence against them asked "Don't you understand that this is the Bible Belt?" But she retorted to the lawyer, "Yes, that's why I'm here." And she explains to me "You see, I have had turn and face my culture head on, and to say 'No! You're not going to run me out of here like an animal.' Literally, I had rather be dead than for my kids or my family see me having to flee because someone else has that power to make me leave." She stays because of what she has to offer the community and because of her felt responsibility to care for her family, and to work for social change around transformation of systems of oppression of all kinds. She is strongly informed by her spiritual commitments. She and her partner host monthly women's circles based on women's spirituality and their work together for community and justice, and attend a local Unitarian church. In addition, she has meditation place in her house. She describes taking great inspiration in the work and legacy of Harriet Tubman, who in spite of ill health "managed to save about 300 people from hell here on earth. Sometimes I think, 'what can one person do?' One person can do a lot! That's my inspiration. I think of that every day. And when I get depressed, I look at [Harriet Tubman] and just think about 'if she could do it, I could do it'!"

Julia. Julia is a 46 year-old Chicana who grew up in the barrio in Southern California. Julia's paternal grandmother lived with her family and knew no English, so her family spoke Spanish at home, and Julia did not learn English until she went to school. She describes her

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working class religious upbringing as "conservative Catholic," and shares warm remembrances of interactions with her grandmother, and her deep connection to "La Virgen de Guadalupe."

Julia was not socialized by her family to be politically active, nor to question authority and notes "we were raised to be 'Mexican Americans' -- you know, be grateful to be living in the U.S. and learn English, but yet keep your Spanish!" She describes a key moment in her politicization as a Chicana, and the development of her own activism as occurring in August of 1970, the summer before she began college at Stanford. Ruben Salazar (among others), a Chicano journalist, was killed during the Chicano Moratorium in Los Angeles, which began as a peaceful demonstration focusing on Chicano rights, and resulted in violence and allegations by the Chicano community of police brutality. "I remember that summer watching the hearings and having a growing consciousness, and of going to Stanford, and being a Chicana, and …not having grown up in a family or community where many of us went to college, I had no clue what to expect." When she began at Stanford, she got involved in the farmworker and other Chicano movements, particularly under the influence of her roommate, "the most radical Chicana" that she had ever met, and one who was particularly central to her own consciousness-raising. Julia continued her activism after graduation by working as an elementary teacher in a bilingual program for a number of years. She went on to worked in a desegregation assistance center concerned with national origin and language issues. She currently works as an education consultant doing training for "culturally relevant" curriculum development, and diversity training with educators in the U.S. and the South Pacific. She notes that she is concerned about all issues of oppression privilege and says "It's bigger than just being Chicana. I'm also a member of a global community – it encompasses more… [F]or me, working for social justice isn't just done 5 days a week; it's in every part of my life… it's a way of living. I call it spirituality, it's a spiritual… it's on a different level."

In describing her spiritual journey, Julia notes that she stopped attending the Catholic Church when she was in college, and was disillusioned by its sexism and its irrelevance to her life then. She describes the need in the more recent years to get more centered, and "to focus on the spiritual part of my work." She returned to her Catholic roots in a critical way, and to her connection to her grandmother and La Virgen de Guadalupe. "I think part of my journey is going back to my heritage, my Aztec and indigenous roots…Ana Castillo gives a different picture of what La Virgen could represent in terms of powerful women… But there's another side to it… I don't always just go with 'this is the way that it is' because I do question 'was that a way for the Spaniards to indoctrinate or convert the Aztecs into Catholicism? Or is it really an Aztec goddess?.' That's a question that Ana Castillo asks in her book, so I go back to that too. But I do believe it's a spirit – a spirit that kind of watches over me."

She considers how her spirituality is played out in her work in her multicultural educational consultants' group and notes: "I find there is a dimension of spirituality in the way we relate to each other and in the way we collectively approach the work of social change. Because we are each from a different cultural background, we express our spirituality in different ways, - Hawaiian chants, prayers to the four directions, Christian prayer…. The interesting thing though, as I think more about it, I suspect that there are also atheists among the group, yet we somehow seem to delve into spirit. It might be striving to be human...I don't know. but we all believe in the goodness of people and the possibility of change, while trying to live a life of community."

Maureen. Maureen is a white woman from an upper middle-class family background in her early 50s who was raised Methodist. By her college days, she had developed strong intellectual commitments to social justice that in her mind required action. She was torn by questions of meaning and decided that she wanted to devote her energy to the Civil Rights Movement due to her ethical commitments. She found support for this in her church, and notes, "I couldn't have said then whether this was a step of Christian commitment or an existentialist leap… In those days, I was intensely torn by these questions, and some days a Christian, some days not, but since both ethical paths seemed to be taking me in the same direction… the next step called for was action." After graduation in the mid-'60s, she went to Chicago and worked for the Southern Christian Leadership Conference on civil rights issues. It was here that she was brought to the study of nonviolence. She felt an intense spiritual commitment among the primary leaders in their

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preaching and in the music of the community that made her feel that together they were "moving in the spirit" which would give them courage to continue their work. She notes "it was from this crucible of spirituality and social action that my own sense of identity and core beliefs were formed." Nevertheless, she had theological trouble with aspects of Christianity, and after a time she left her church due to what she saw as its hypocrisy.

She continued her social activist work, and approximately ten years later, driven by the difficulties of a failed marriage and its resulting depression, she was introduced to the practice of an Indian based form of yogic meditation. The regular meditation and involvement with a meditation community facilitated much needed healing at sustenance. At times she wondered if those practices were compatible with her politics but was reassured when she went to the main (US) ashram in New York and saw various remembrances to Gandhi and King. She also got involved in women's spirituality movements, and believes that there are many paths to God. But her current meditation, chanting, spiritual practice,is more rooted in the Siddha Yoga tradition. She is drawn to the creation of a sense of the sacredness, and noted that this was what was lacking in the white mainline protestant churches she was socialized in. "They were a social gathering place, a source of social support community when people were sick and dying, and they talked about ethics, so it was kind of intellectual, but they had nothing to offer in terms of helping people to have a deeper experience of God." She suggests that some sense of the sacred was available in the Pentecostal and black protestant churches rather than her own, and notes "it really is invoking the spirit, and I find the Indian tradition I'm a part of , the Siddha yoga, both evokes that kind of spiritual experience, but has an intellectual way of making sense out of it." Maureen meditates regularly, and meets twice a week for community meditation.

Maureen has been working as a college professor for many years, and teaches classes about social movements. She uses readings that have a more spiritual focus in relationship to social action and approaches it "as an essential part of what you have to do to maintain yourself as a social activist just to take care of yourself…I think it's really important for people who want to be activists to learn a different mode of working, and even of managing power in a different way…It's one thing to think you want to be different, but to actually hold a space in yourself so you actually can BE different, I think takes a spiritual grounding." She does not talk about her own individual spiritual journey very much in her classes, noting that it is more implicit in her teaching and is somewhat more present in her advising. She notes, "I do look for a next step in spiritual development for [students], and try to suggest classes and activities that might provide that for them." She notes that in the future it might be in sharing some of her own story.

Concluding Discussion

Clearly, the women in this study all had a deep spiritual commitment that informed their activism. While this played out somewhat differently for each of the participants (including those whose stories were not featured here) and their definitions of spirituality varied, there were aspects that they each had in common. (1) Knowledge of their childhood religious tradition was formative in giving participants something to "push against" in reappropriating a more "woman positive" and redefinition for their adult spirituality and a sense of the sacred. (2) Participants' spiritual convictions, and/or community, and meditation practices provided a grounding place for nurturance in specific and concrete ways, and for renewed courage to continue as educators for social justice (3) Their spirituality is grounded in their culture, and each of the participants found themselves reflecting back and reappropriating the healthy aspects of their early spiritual socialization that kept them connected to their ancestors and/or cultural roots, and discarding what was not life enhancing. (4) All participants reported that their spirituality informs their educational practice in implicit ways, as a way of living and inter-relating, though are hesitant to discuss it directly in the educational activities they lead. Yet most participants reported trying to provide experiential activities that they defined as grounded in a spirituality to unify groups, in solidifying bonds, and in moving beyond conflict. In conclusion, this exploratory study is limited, but it offers some insight to how spirituality informs the work of women adult educators teaching for social action and makes a beginning contribution to the emancipatory adult education literature.

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References: Will be provided at the presentation.

Re-Created Selves: Longitudinal Case Studies of Meaning-Making by Women in Retirement

The purpose of life is to matter, to count, to stand for something,
to have had it made some difference that you even lived at all.

Vivian Wilson Mott, Ph.D.

Abstract: The purpose of this second phase of longitudinal research was to continue exploration of women's retirement as a mid and late-life developmental transition, particularly looking at the ways in which the ongoing reflection and learning continued to impact the retirement experience of six women.

The issue of women's retirement is becoming increasingly important as large numbers of consistently employed women reach retirement age. Numerous factors have significantly impacted women's retirement, among them, altered workplace demographics, mandates regarding workplace discrimination and retirement age, improved health care and increased longevity, and changes in gender and career roles. However, much of the literature on retirement — the preponderance of which has included only males — has been prescriptive in nature, focusing on retirement planning, economic risks, and health issues. Some research has suggested that the economic vulnerability due to limited retirement resources and longer solitary life spans may not be the most challenging aspects of this life transition for women.

Earlier exploratory research in 1994 began the examination of women's retirement as a mid and late-life developmental transition, and the ways in which educational intervention might facilitate the transition. Of particular interest was the women's process of "meaning-making, or the examination and critical reflection of the thoughts and feelings embedded in the experience" of retirement (Mott, 1994, p. 22). That research suggested not only an active developmental aspect to women's meaning-making, but also their conscious deliberation regarding the integration of their retirement experiences into new self-concepts. Further, at the conclusion of the original study, the participants noted that their responses to retirement and even their self-concepts as women were continuing to change (Mott, 1998). Therefore, the purpose of this second phase of longitudinal research was to continue exploration of women's retirement as a mid and late-life developmental transition, particularly looking at the ways in which the women's ongoing reflection and learning continued to impact their retirement experience.

Review of the Literature

The conceptual framework on which the research was based was primarily drawn from four broad areas of literature. Literature on meaning-making (Carlsen, 1988; Frankl, 1963; and Kegan, 1982, for instance) and women's experiential learning (i.e., Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, and Tarule, 1986) served as the basis for understanding their reflective learning. Carlsen, for instance, refers to the cataloguing of the mind's information regarding any phenomenon, of "forming and reforming of intentions and significance, of what one has in mind" (p. 23). Much of Carlsen's work is based on that of Frankl and Kegan, both of whom saw the process of meaning-making as central to the human state. Belenky and her colleagues used the term "voice" to explain alternative ways of knowing, defining self, and making personal meaning out of our development and learning experiences. This framework was especially helpful in understanding the subjective, procedural, and increasingly constructivist ways of thinking in which the women engaged.

The third area of literature provided the foundation for understanding retirement in general. Broadly, this literature offers descriptions of various aging and retirement models and focuses on the predictors and risks associated with successful transition into retirement. For instance, of particular relevance with the women in this research were the activity and continuity theories of retirement. The activity theory explains the psychosocial tendency of retirees to find alternative sources of activity to replace those lost when paid employment ends (Friedmann & Havighurst, 1954; Miller, 1965). An extension of the activity theory is the continuity theory, generally credited to Atchley (1989), which suggests that retirees respond to the changes imposed by retirement largely through attempts to maintain continuity in more aspects of their lives than there is change. Finally, literature dealing with the variety of factors which influence one's transition to retirement — among them, health, disposition and attitude, financial resources, occupation and work history, educational level, familial relationships, and social support networks — emerged from multiple sources and was helpful in understanding the women's retirement experiences (Atchley, 1994; Clark, 1994; Kimmel, 1990).

In addition to these four bodies of literature which dealt specifically with the research at hand, educational gerontology resources (i.e., Erikson, Erikson, & Kivnick, 1986; Fisher & Wolf, 1998) were also considered relative to the various educational opportunities in which the women took part.

Research Methodology

In the first phase of research (conducted in 1994), data were collected from eight women between the ages of 58-74. The women had been retired for a period of 2-6 years from occupations in which they had consistently worked for more than 10 years; their occupational areas included education, nursing, business, and manufacturing and service industries. Introduction to the women — all healthy and community dwelling — was gained through colleagues, professional associations, and recommendations by other women. Regardless of the good health of the women involved, participant mortality — or the loss of research participants due to any number of reasons — is an issue of concern in any longitudinal research. In the original phase of this study, however, the women were so enthusiastic about their participation and contributions, and formed such close bonds with one another throughout and after the research, that there was little apprehension about losing any of them except to serious circumstances. Sadly, however, two of the original group of women are no longer a part of this second phase of research. One of the women died within a year of the first research phase; the second woman moved to another state to begin a new career (at the age of 70!) and help care for her grandchildren. The six women who now remain in the study — one Asian, three White, and two African-American — are 62-78 years of age and have been retired now for an average of 8 years. No new women have joined the research project at this point.

As in the first phase of research, data in this second phase were collected using in-depth conversational interviews and focus groups. Interviews of approximately one hour and focus groups that were frequently two hours or more in duration were again audio-taped and transcribed verbatim. To again ensure consistency in data gathering, an interview guide was used for the individual interviews and included such questions as: *How do you feel about yourself as a retired woman after these additional four years? What learning have you engaged in that may have helped facilitate your life in retirement? What impact have these [courses, workshops, counseling sessions] had on your meaning-making? How have your self-concept... life perspectives... activities changed? What do you continue to learn about yourself?* During the focus groups in this phase, there proved to be little need for guidance regarding conversation or research focus. The women were increasingly self-directed in discussing their further explorations into the role that retirement was playing in their lives. They relayed examples of educational activities they considered instrumental to their ongoing transition, probed one another for deeper exploration into topics that seemed promising from a developmental perspective, and encouraged one another with active listening and attention as their stories were woven. A third form of data came from journals that the women began keeping near the conclusion of the first phase of research. These journals provided a rich source of clarifying data, further intensifying their spoken words.

The data were analyzed using the constant comparative method. Since the women were queried in the original research about the consistency of themes and findings drawn from the data, in this phase of the project, the women actually anticipated being able to engage in this level of analysis again. Individually and in small groups, the women assisted with the categorization and coding of the data, often clarified the thematic structure of emerging findings, and posed alternative meanings and significance of the data. In keeping with their constant suggestions and contributions in the focus groups during data collection, several of the women continue to serve as participant reviewers of this and other manuscripts evolving from the research.

Research Results and Discussion

Research findings initially indicated that the women were beginning to make meaning of their retirement experiences through the following process: (a) ***exploration*** of their lives in retirement, including the nature of retirement and the daily impact on their personal interactions, daily schedules, lifestyles, and health; (b) ***accommodation*** of the experience into the images they held of themselves, that is, sense-making of themselves as retired women; and, (c) ***acceptance*** of their retirement roles and the changes it held for them. At that time, most of the women had also begun keeping their journals, and all of the women were actively seeking out various educational opportunities and interpersonal relationships as vehicles for further exploration and understanding of their transition into retirement (Mott, 1994, 1998).

After the passage of four years, several of the women now spoke of better understanding their transitions into retirement, the developmental aspect of their experiences, and the reflection and growth prompted by the research, educational interventions, and social support groups. What had been conceptualized as a three-step process of meaning-making — exploration, accommodation, and acceptance — had now been reflected upon, reconsidered, and revised. The meaning-making process was now reconceptualized as (a) reflection, (b) accommodation, (c) transcendence, and (d) integration.

Reflection. Two of the women suggested that what we initially termed "exploration" into the retirement experience would better be referred to as "reflection." As one of the women said, "I'm not just thinking about what retirement did to my day-to-day routine, even then I wasn't just thinking; I'm introspective, reflective about it." This conversation occurred during an early focus group with others agreeing with the subtle distinction and citing the benefit of the journals in facilitating the process of reflection.

Accommodation. The women continued to assert that one of the early means of making sense of the experience of retirement was to "work it into" the images they held of themselves as women. For one, her retirement from nursing meant that she could volunteer in her neighborhood school as a nurse assistant; for the business woman, her newly developing sense of herself as retired was *accommodated* by her plans to write some training material for her local Chamber of Commerce. Thus, at this point in their retirement and reflection, the women were clearer that to make sense of themselves as newly retired women, it helped to accommodate that image with a continuation of some former role.

Transcendence. Another point of clarification had to do with what had been thought of as acceptance of the retirement role. Particularly evident in the women's journals was the theme of, not just acceptance of their retirement, but of transcendence, or the "rising above the limits of the experience [of retirement] ... with a new self-concept." In further explanation, one of the women spoke of the "ongoing re-creation" of her image, an "image which now doesn't define me in terms of what I did for a living, but as a woman in a new stage of life who used to do 'so and so' when I worked!" "You've transcended!" another chimed in, to which the first replied "Amen!"

Integration. Finally, several of the women suggested that the process of meaning-making didn't end — as was previously thought — with even this transcendence beyond the limits of retirement. Individually, in both their journals and interviews, as well as in the focus groups, the women spoke of their retirement experiences as "finally being *integrated* into the remainder of life." As one woman explained:

> When I was a young woman, I had a child and being that child's mother defined me, who I was, what I should do, how I lived my life. Eventually, though, I was no longer just a girl's mother, but a woman who had a daughter, but did lots of other things, was lots of other... Well, there were other parts of me besides being a mother. It's like that with retirement, too. When I first retired, I was a retired teacher. I thought like a retired

> teacher. Hell, I probably even looked like a retired teacher! But eventually, I've become more than that. I'm a woman, a retired woman, but also a mother, former teacher, and a retired woman. Retirement is just another experience that I've integrated into the rest of who I am.

So, at the conclusion of this second phase of research, the meaning-making process now includes (a) reflection, (b) accommodation, (c) transcendence, and (d) integration into a fuller life perspective. Other findings were also evident and warrant brief mention. First, the women's often self-initiated efforts toward educational intervention and social service support facilitated their successful transition into retirement in significant ways. For instance, the women participated in additional retirement seminars, journaling workshops, and credit and non-credit classes in such topics as aging and psychology, financial planning, and spirituality. They formed a "sisters reflection group" in which they continued the kinds of discussions begun in our focus groups. Second, although the women's sense of self-worth were not detrimentally influenced by their retirement, nonetheless, their work had been very important to them. Indeed, part of the meaning-making process included an accommodation of who they had been as employed women into their sense of self. Integration of the experience and the ability to not be defined by their work came later in the meaning-making process, after much reflection and growth. And third, at the beginning of their transition into retirement, the women seemed to exemplify the activity theory espoused by Friedmann and Havighurst (1954) and continuity theory, as explained by Atchley (1994). That is, part of their process of meaning-making was facilitated by engaging in alternative sources of activity that provided continuity in their routines and through which their identities could be maintained.

Implications for Theory, Practice, and Future Research

Not only does this research hold significance for adult education, but it is important for gerontology as well. However challenging longitudinal research in gerontology is, the increasing numbers of people living into their eighth, ninth, and even tenth decades offer gerontologists and educators a unique opportunity to investigate issues relative to aging, learning, and development. This research project is among a limited number which examines aging using a longitudinal model which can span several decades. The research adds valuable theoretical basis to literature on meaning-making, reflective processes, and women's learning. Through consideration of the educational interventions and support structures which proved instrumental in the women's learning and reflective processes, there are practical implications as well for educational programming and social service with the elderly.

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